



Author's Copy.

by Self - corrected

August. 1854

for 2nd Edition. T.M.

TOM THORNTON.

Darling & Son, Printers, 31, Leadenhall Street, London.

TOM THORNTON,

OR,

LAST RESOURCES.

BY WILLIAM PLATT,

Author of "Betty Westminster"; "Yorke House"; "Grace of Glenholm";
"Alice Hythe"; "Mothers & Sons"; "Linden Manor"; "Tales of the
"Quod putavi fore gaudium, id exitit exitum."
"Tom Pocognoli"; "Mountains";
"Hans"; "Story of a Lost Life"; ~~so, so, &c.~~
"Angelo Lyons"; "The House of Rockport";
"Wallercourt"; &c., &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

JAMES BLACKWOOD, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLIV.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

823
P685±
v.2

TOM THORNTON.

PART II.

CONTINUED.

appropriately CHAPTER I.

WHEN Plumley and O'Hara entered the room, the remark of Blanche struck me as ~~strangely~~ introductory to their appearance.—“Talk of the old gentleman,” said I to my wife.

“Ah!” cried Plumley, holding out a hand to me, and addressing Blanche with his eyes, “I am delighted—ever uppermost in your thoughts, eh?”

“You lost a sight last night, my boy,” said O'Hara, with a horse laugh, and adjusting his collar by the chimney glass.

“Indeed,” said I, “what was that?”

"Oh! nothing," explained Plumley; "a bit of a breeze between Mowbray and me—that's all."

"What about?"

"Well, I hardly know, ~~there were ten~~ ^{affair} pounds on the rubber; ~~we~~ couldn't agree about the odd trick—referred it to O'Hara. If we couldn't agree, the best way was to cut for it. Doubled it, and cut—Mowbray lost—said the cards were packed ~~there was~~ a row ~~x~~ threw a bottle at me ~~x~~ smashed the chimney glass, upset the table, and had to pay fifteen pounds damages, a silly fellow!"

"And the affair at Condette to come off?"

"Not a bit of it, Tom," laughed O'Hara. "Mowbray's a brick, sir—done the handsome—what can a man do more?"

"Impossible," responded Plumley, "and so ^{we} are going to have a snug quartett at O'Hara's to-day, and want you, Tom, to

we've made it up and

make the fourth, if Mrs. T—— can possibly spare you for this once."

"No good wife could refuse such a husband a little innocent recreation," contended O'Hara, addressing Blanche.

"He may please himself," replied my wife, keeping her eyes fixed on her crochet.

"There, Tom, you hear that?" said Plumley. "By Saint Nicholas, if I could get such a wife as your's, Tom, hang me if I wouldn't get ~~married~~ to-morrow!"

Mrs T's "She's ~~a~~ a pattern," applauded O'Hara. "Then it's settled—six o'clock, to a moment."

"No playing, I suppose?" said I, carelessly.

"Not a sous' worth, if you don't like."

Blanche raised her eyes from her crochet, but encountering Plumley's fixed earnestly on her face, dropped them again on her work.

It can't be that he's afraid of a
certain lecture from such a wife"

"I'll tell you, then, how it is," said I; "I don't feel quite the thing to-day, Plumley; but am exceedingly obliged, you know, all the same."

"A fit of the blues, eh?" said Plumley.

"~~He's afraid of a certain lecture,~~" laughed O'Hara.

"Nothing like a good dinner and a stiff glass of brandy-and-water, I say, if you're in the dumps," ~~said~~ Plumley. ~~suggested~~

"Or a hand at sixpenny picquet," ~~sug~~
~~gested~~ O'Hara; "still, if you don't feel well,
we wont press you. Perhaps Mrs. T~~horne~~ will let you drop in after dinner for an hour;
we'll ~~promise to~~ see him safe home, eh,
Plumley? You don't allow latch keys, yet,

By Jove! Mrs. Thornton?" and so, after lighting a
you're right; cigar a piece, and laughing at me for being

such a spooney, I was left alone to receive
my full mead of praise for my good behaviour,
and its due and fitting reward,
which I accepted, of course, with all the

That's a promise,

sucking the oz-molar knob of his cane
and playing the devil's tattoo with
his toe.

Look there," continued she, pointing to the figures of our visitors as they loitered up the street—"misfortune makes us acquainted with strange companions, ^{TOM THORNTON.} and not its least ⁵ penalty, I'm thinking, grace which so meritorious a sacrifice deserved.

"Now, you see, dear," said Blanche, "what it is to have your little mentor at your elbow. Depend on it, Tom, there is no life like one of active and profitable employment to keep one out of mischief. If the mind has nothing else to engage it, it will find occupation in those resources of idleness and depravity most congenial to its taste and disposition, which abound for those that seek them. At must have something to do. So it is, you see, that Plumley exists for the brandy-bottle, and O'Hara for the dice-box—they have nothing else to do. How heavily the hours hang, don't they, on the hands of idle people? and how difficult it is to shake off habits of indolence, clinging like a leprosy to their victims till they drag them into ~~leathemess and~~ ~~shame~~ ^{— i /}

"No doubt ^{dearest,} the knowledge how to use

^{villany}
such spectacles of ~~depravity~~ and
shame as those Plumleys and
O'Haras—miserable wretches! exhibited
for our edification".

and the disposition, too, ~~how~~ so to use it,

time to the best advantage is ~~a valuable~~ ^{an invaluable} acquisition," I granted

~~yes, and without it, Tom, dear,~~ "With the right disposition, too, so to use it, Tom, invaluable. ~~Without it,~~ what is life but a confused maze of uncertainties, and dangers, and perplexities—a ^{hollow} scheme of endless vexations and disappointments.

~~but~~ ~~time is money, as they say—if people could be brought to think that their time, Tom, is cash in hand, how much better use they would make of it than to squander it away, as thousands do, who think they have plenty to spare, but who would look on each side of a franc piece twenty times before they spent it; and yet a thousand such,~~

~~thought,~~ laid out at usury, would, perhaps, be infinitely less productive, in the end, than one day wisely spent. So, now, having given you a lecture, which I hope you will profit by, like a good boy, we will put the finishing touches to the portrait, if you please."

~~lay to heart and~~
~~And, politically regarded only—if~~

December 20.—The finishing touch put at last, and I might look. The Waddlesterns and Alice Faulkner, admitted to a private inspection, almost mad with impatience to look, too.

“There, then,” said Blanche, with a look of triumph, *c'est fini!*”

There was a simultaneous rush to the little round table.

“How beautiful!” exclaimed Alice Faulkner; “the very image of him, too, isn’t it?”

“As like as two peas, my love, I declare,” acquiesced Mrs. Waddlestern, looking at me and then at the portrait, and then at me again, as if she had never seen me before.

“By Jove!” said I, after a moment’s silence, for I was staggered, *“you don’t mean that that’s like me, Miss Alice?”*

“The image of you—don’t you think so? only, if anything, rather better looking. Law, dear, if you only succeed half as well with mine, wont George be delighted?”

“Don’t you really think it like you, Tom?” said Blanche, rather ~~seriously~~, *pensively*.

“Well, we are not the best judges, perhaps, of ourselves,” said I; “there is a resemblance certainly; but, if you ask me really what I do think, I must candidly own I thought I was rather a better looking fellow than that.”

“The vanity!” exclaimed Alice Faulkner. “It’s perfection, dear—don’t mind what he says—it is just like the men—they never think anything half handsome enough for them.”

“The hair is excellent, that I must admit,” said I; “but the eyes seem to me to want—”

“That charming expression of the original, you mean, Mr. Tom,” added Miss Alice, “which, what pencil, I should like to know, could do justice to?”

“Well, now I look again,” observed Mrs. Waddlestern, putting on her spectacles,

and the whiskers life itself;

“ perhaps the eyes *are* a little too small, — a very, very little, but that is easily altered. The mouth is Mr. Thornton’s to a *t*, when he looks grave; and how beautifully the emerald shirt pin and the watch chain are done — it’s a pity you could’t have put the hand in with a ring on the little finger. What frame do you mean to have for it? — I do so long to see it in a frame. You ought to be very proud,” added Mrs. Waddlestern, addressing me in a half whisper, but sufficiently loud for Blanche to hear, “ of such a clever little wife.”

really “ And you *think* it like? ” said I, beginning myself to fancy it more than I did at first.

“ Like you? yes, the very image, with just the slightest alteration in the eyes, and the mouth not quite so grave; and if you could introduce the hand, dear, holding a book or a pocket handkerchief, with a ring

leapest

B 3

exclaimed Mrs. Waddlestern, insisting that I should put myself in the position I was taken in, and examining me on every side —

—/ on the little finger, wouldn't that be beautiful?"

Visitors were announced, and in came O'Hara and Plumley.

"The very thing," whispered I; "they know nothing about it yet, let us see what *they* say."

exclaimed "Ah, what have we here?" ~~said~~ Plumley, approaching the table round which we were standing in a group, "a new purchase, eh?"

"Do you know any one like it?" asked Blanche.

Plumley looked at the picture for a moment, then intently into Blanche's eyes—a slight blush ~~came~~ and disappeared.

"Know it? yes—Tom Thornton, any one could see that with half an eye."

"There, then!" cried Alice Faulkner, clapping her little hands, "are you satisfied now, Mr. Tom?"

"What say you, O'Hara?" said I.

! "By George, my dear fellow, I'm not

suffused her cheeks

evidently much discomposed -

TOM THORNTON.

11

- / much of a judge, but ^{as} barring the nose, I was thinking it was not unlike you, Plumley."

" Heavens, what an idea!" exclaimed Alice Faulkner; " like Mr. Plumley? he is joking, my love."

" Like Mr. Plumley?" echoed Mrs. Waddlestern; " he must be joking."

" A most unexpected and, I grieve to think, unmerited compliment ^{as} I must admit," sighed Plumley.

Blanche bit her lip. Whoever else was joking, I saw it was no joking matter with her; when, to my infinite relief, Mowbray and Strong made their appearance, and the conversation turning on the news of the morning, poor Blanche, by degrees, ~~recovered~~ ^{resumed} her self-possession.

Soon after, Plumley, remembering an engagement, went off with O'Hara, evidently gratified with the event of the portrait. Mrs. Waddlestern had some marketing ^{in high glee}

- after the portrait was disposed of, and Mrs. Waddlestern had somewhat recovered her composure

to do, and Blanche some shopping with
Alice Faulkner; Mowbray alone remained.

“ What say you to a turn on the pier,
Tom ?” said he, “ I have something to tell
you.”

December 21.—“ What do you think
I heard to-day, Tom ?” said Blanche, myster-
iously, as we sat cracking filberts and sip-
ping our Muscat Lunel after dinner, having
settled it unanimously that O’Hara’s joke
about the portrait was in the worst possible
taste.—“ You will see how lucky it was you
did not dine with them yesterday, Mowbray
; — n lost seventy pounds last night, Now, isn’t
it shocking ?”

“ So he was telling me,” replied I, care-
lessly.

“ He must be mad, Tom, to go on play-
ing as he does, for he never seems to win.”

“ An infatuation, I suppose, Blanche.”

“ A want of common sense, dear; I call
it.”

hereabouts

TOM THORNTON.

13

"Rather a scarcer commodity with many people than you seem to imagine," said I.

"Nothing appears to open his eyes, Tom."

"They are beginning, I think, to see a little clearer now."

~~he~~ How can he ^{ever} pay such large sums, Tom?"

"They give him time, no doubt."

"But the day of payment must come at last."

"Seventy pounds ~~wont~~ ruin him, ^{won't} Blanche."

"Not if that were all he owed, dear; but Strong says the bills he gives are frightful."

"Indeed! Who says so—Strong?"

"Yes, and that he is in to Plumley and O'Hara for not a farthing less than four hundred pounds already."

"You don't say so? He didn't tell me a word about that."

"I am always so grateful, Tom, amidst

"He must be blind, Tom; but where's the wonder?—They muddle his brains between them, poor fellow!—Plumley makes him drink, and O'Hara makes him pay; and he never had any self control. But

— I'm confoundedly down to-night —

14

TOM THORNTON.

all our troubles, that they never got you into any of their horrible bill transactions here."

“ Pass the wine, dear, and if you won't have any more, take the guitar, and sing one of your pretty plaintive airs. I wonder what Aunt Lucy is doing at this moment—whether she ever gives me a thought now?”

“ Yes, yes, many a thought, Tom, and Henrietta Clementina too, no doubt. Do you know, dearest, I dreamt of Henrietta twice last week.”

“ Indeed—what then?”

“ Shouldn't you like to know what about?”

“ Yes, if you would like to tell me.”

“ It was very shocking.”

“ Then say no more about it.”

must —/ “ I am sure, Tom, you often sigh to be at the old Hall again, perhaps, Tom, that happy day may not be so far off as you imagine.”

would make haste and come

TOM THORNTON.

15

only " I wish it ~~came~~ to-morrow; but no such ~~then~~ luck for me, Blanche."

" Did Henrietta sing too, as well as play so charmingly?"

" Not so well as you, dear."

" And was she indeed so very beautiful?"

" I never saw but one more so."

" Fye, fye, Tom! and she loved you to distraction?"

" As fondly, faithfully, I believe, as woman's heart could love."

" And she is very, very rich? Heigho!

~~I don't~~ I ~~do not~~ think I can sing to please you, Tom, to-night—something plaintive you say; well then, I will try.

If I might choose my lot,
I would a humble cot
Were mine, in some sweet spot,
With peace and health;
And I would envy not
The mightiest despot,
Though all the world he'd got,
And all its wealth.

“ In pomp and palace born,
 The heart how oft forlorn,
 By pride and passion torn,

Stranger to health :

Happy he, so resigned
 To God’s will, who can find
 In a cot peace of mind—

Content is wealth.

“ Wherefore regret or fear
 What may befall thee here ~~—~~ ?
 Though nought thy bosom cheer,

And dark thy doom ~~—~~ /
 Whate’er thy God decree,
 Therewith contented be,
 That peace may follow thee
 Beyond the tomb.”

Sweet heart, thought I, who but would joyfully relinquish palace and pomp and splendour, for the cot which thou wouldest share with him! *with emotion*

December 22.—“ Tom,” said Mowbray,
 as we walked up the pier, “ I’ve been a precious fool ~~—~~ I see it all now—duped by that Plumley and O’Hara; ~~but it’s no use talking about it now.~~ Lucky for you you didn’t come last night ~~—~~ lost seventy pounds

To Plumley

hallow and

never was in such a fix in my life—

and am terribly down about it. ~~Plumley~~ ^{He says} ~~will~~ take a bill at six weeks, if ~~you will~~ ^{he'll} back it, Tom ~~if~~ if you would, you'd be doing me a kindness; and ~~if~~ if there's any thing I can do for you at any time, you know you've only to ask."

" My dear fellow, you know I should be happy to serve a friend in any way I could; but really I don't quite see how I can possibly help you in this ~~I have~~ ^{The fact} promised my wife never to put my name to any thing of ~~is~~ ^{is} I've the sort."

" ~~Well~~, of course you can do as you like about it; but I wish you ~~would~~, or I shall get into a precious mess: your wife need know nothing about it—it's a mere matter of form between friends. It happens so confoundedly awkward at this moment, for I can't get the tin for about three weeks."

" What if you are disappointed?" said I; " you know I have nothing to lose."

" If there ~~was~~ any doubt about it, you ^{were}

That's deuced awkward! Well

don't suppose, Tom, I should ask you? You may want a good turn yourself some day—a friend in need—eh?"

I have a soft place, somewhere, in my heart; however I fight against it, there it is to mar all my better convictions—I might want a good turn myself some day—~~how~~—^Hever indifferent one may feel to such considerations with no earthly prospect of any want that can present itself, they have an especial and undeniably claim on those unfortunate members of a fraternity in whom community of interests and obligations works marvellous sentiments of sympathy and good fellowship. It is astonishing, too, how a few glasses of champagne, though they may somewhat mystify the understanding, open and enlarge the heart.

That night "the little memorandum" was satisfactorily adjusted ~~Mr. Plumley deposited it safely in his pocket book.~~ Was I not as sure, as of any earthly circumstance,

and safely deposited in Mr. Plumley's pocket book.

that it was a mere matter of form—that I should never hear anything more about it ~~X~~ ? Wherefore, then, returned I to my home with a downcast eye and a heavy heart, wherefore laid I my head on a sleepless pillow ?

“ How restless, Tom, you were last night,” said Blanche, to-day ; “ I don’t think you slept a wink ; nor could I. I don’t know why, but I have had a load here, at my heart, for the last day or two which I cannot shake off. It must have been the champagne you drank at Mowbray’s that kept you awake ; it never does agree with you after dinner, you know.”

“ It might have been,” said I ; but, oh, how my heart smote me for the lie !

December 27.—I cannot, do what I will, get this bill affair off my mind ; it haunts me night and day. Oh, would that I had the courage to make a clean breast of it to her from whom I have never kept a secret

I bring to bear against it all the usual antidotes, but

, that it was a mere matter of form,
and

20

TOM THORNTON.

arrant

till now. What cowards does conscience
make of the bravest of us. But why trou-
ble and vex her, perhaps unnecessarily?

—/ After all, what is there so much to fear!

Has not Mowbray promised me it shall be

all right; that I shall hear no more about

it? He will be rich some day, too, and —

knows
better than
to
ever
enough
that
n

Plumley ~~never would~~ trouble him, if he ~~ever~~
wanted more time, it wouldn't be worth
his while—he is not plucked quite naked
yet. No, no, they are too good judges for
enough

I hate uncertainty and suspense, though

I know that realities don't often correspond
with one's anticipations; and this holds

pains and
penalties
good, I suppose, with the ~~anxieties~~ of life
as well as its pleasures; and well for poor
blind-sighted human nature that it is so.

If the fruition fall short of the expecta-
tion, little harm is done, as far as the one is
concerned; nay, in the long run there is
little doubt but that we are the gainers;

anticipations and realities don't
always correspond;

perhaps unnecessarily

but if our fears and forebodings were not often premature, when evil threatens, as well as our hopes are exaggerated when pleasure promises, how would the spirit bear up at all? On second thoughts I don't think I shall say a word to Blanche about it. It would only make her unhappy, ~~for nothing~~. Mowbray is sure to ^{make} it all right.

take care and

Sanguine dropped in for a chat ~~in~~ high dudgeon with the Waddlesterns for cutting him, he says, because he had his old coat on. Blanche declared she should not have known it from his Sunday one, which I verily believe, and produced the portrait for his opinion. "It deserved a place in the National Gallery!" "Perhaps, he would honour her with sittings some day for the gallery at Sanguine Hall!" "Zounds! and that he would most assuredly do; and he trusted it would not be long before he *had* the gratification of seeing the portrait of Sir Septimus

Sanguine occupying its place in company with his ancestors ; and then let the Wadlesterns cut him if they pleased.

“ This is a flimsy world,” continued Mr. Sanguine taking his seat on the sofa by Blanche’s side ; “ appearances carry the day, *my dear madame* ~~sir~~, impossible to form a correct opinion of ^{of}, *I tell you, don’t they* anybody or anything by the look. And *what trouble people take to deceive them-selves as well as others*. How many a *neighbour’s* black heart, Heaven help us ! beats under an immaculate shirt front, and how many an honest one beneath a seedy doublet.”

“ It would be a curious study to examine how it is,” said I, “ that people take so much pains to pass for what nature obviously never designed them. In proportion as a man is a coward at heart, how he enjoys stories of daring adventures and valorous achievements ; if a little man, he wears a broad-brimmed hat, and a huge umbrella ; and you may be sure, when you see a pen-

sive pale-faced, effeminate young gentleman, with thin waist and high-heeled boots, that he is the bold cavalier ~~to~~ all his fair acquaintances, and if occasion require, their doughty champion to boot."

" And if he can but accomplish a moustache and whiskers, too," added Blanche, " I suppose there is not a more formidable as well as well-favoured personage in existence."

" Exactly so," applauded Sanguine ; " and so it is, you see a sickly sentimental gent turn out in an easterly wind, with collars *à la Byron*, though the quinsy or the mumps have stared him in the face from his cradle, and the victim of apoplexy torturing himself in a cravat, only fit for a marching grenadier. People won't be comfortable, sir. Look at the importance attached to a white neckcloth and a cropped poll. Thousands, sir, are rolling in their clarences on the strength of nothing else ;

yet, Fontleroy and Exchequer-bill Smith were never seen in public with a black one, or a greasy coat collar. But the world smiles on white 'chokers' and trimmed pates—they are sure cards, sir, and those know their value well who play them. What's in a name, or in a neckcloth, say you? Everything, sir, as the world will have it. Your compact close-shaven man of business can tell you what there is in it; he got his place, and keeps it, by his white *choker* ~~cravat~~ and good text hand. Rest assured, sir, it is to the obstinate adherence to fancy ties and curly locks, that many a poor devil with the soul of a Newton, is kept all his days with starved carcass and threadbare coat; but he has his indemnification, sir, and enjoys it."

"~~Nor would I~~ rob him of it," said I, "were it even to exalt him to the chief clerk's stool at Child's."

"Not that you would fear his honesty,"

And who, in pity's name, would

smiling
pursued Mr. Sanguine, *laughing*, “ your money, you have no doubt, would be quite as safe in his keeping, as in that of the pink faced, trustworthy, ~~middle aged~~ gentleman in the immaculate ‘ choker,’ who never read Lord Byron, and would beat him hollow in text hand, and make the same pen last, without nibbing, for three months. But watch those immaculate gentlemen close, when number one is at stake ; then you see, sir, the true breed of the animal— your long shaggy-haired dog is your noble, docile, generous beast ; but your short haired, prick-eared cur, is a cur in all his attributes, and a cur, sir, will remain, ~~put~~ him as you will, to the end of the chapter.” *pet and pat*

Having thus found vent for his spleen, Mr. Sanguine drew on one glove, and, seizing his stick, had reached the door, when Mrs. Waddlestern entered. Mrs. Waddlestern, evidently surprised, drew back ; Mr. Sanguine drew back, too ; it seemed that

such neither the one could go out, nor the other come in. I could not conceive how it was to end, when Blanche, ever considerate in seasons of distress, stepped forward, and, taking Mrs. Waddlestern by one hand, and Mr. Sanguine by the other—" How ridiculous," said she, " for old friends to stand on ceremony."

" Zounds !" muttered Sanguine ; " 'twas nobly done ;" and bolted from the room.

" Well, dear, I am so glad to find you at home," said Mrs. Waddlestern, taking a long breath, and spreading herself out on the sofa ; " and how goes on the pencil ? What a strange blunder of O'Hara's, wasn't it ?—just like him, a silly fellow ; but never mind what he says—he knows no more of the fine arts, love, than that hassock."

" Do you see any resemblance to Mr. Plumley ?" said Blanche.

" I, my dear ?—law ! love, how can you ask me such a question. It is a pity,

though, I must say, that O'Hara is so indiscreet with his tongue ; it causes so many ridiculous remarks to be made ~~by~~ people, you know, will talk, my dear ; but you must not mind a pin what they say."

? "I mind ~~it~~" exclaimed Blanche, looking surprised ; "what have I to do with it ?"

8 "You misunderstand me, dear," explained Mrs. Waddlestern, laying her hand on Blanche's knee ; "you have nothing to care for ; but people are so ill natured—they will talk. I did say to Rebecca, that I wouldn't tell you any such rubbish ; but I think it is my duty, perhaps. ~~Why~~, dearest, you will hardly believe they have got it about, that you have taken Plumley's likeness, and that your husband is very angry and jealous about it."

8 " *O tempora ! O mores !*" cried I—"what next ?"

? "Indeed ~~it~~" said Blanche, calmly ; and, reaching her portfolio, she took out the

added she

portrait. "Then, perish the falsehood with the innocent cause that gave rise to it!" and tearing it in half, she threw it, without the slightest apparent compunction, into the fire.

"You silly, cruel, wicked creature!" cried Mrs. Waddlestern, seizing the tongs, and making several ineffectual plunges at the bottom of the grate, to rescue me from destruction—"you incorrigible little thing! how could you ever think of it?"

For myself, I looked on, fairly dumb-struck between surprise and admiration. I had never before seen anything approaching to such spirit in my wife, and, for the life of me, I could not even look angry.

"Well, there is an end of that!" said Blanche, good-humouredly; "and now tell me ^{what} you bought the potatoes?"

"I was going to tell you, dear—indeed, I came in on purpose," replied Mrs. Waddlestern, collecting herself; "but that unfortu-

nate portrait put it all out of my head—
Yes, love, I have bought a sack of the most
beautiful kidneys you ever saw; and such a
bargain! I tried hard for twelve and six-
pence, but they ~~would not~~ let them go ~~wouldn't~~
under thirteen shillings; and if ~~I had not~~ ~~hadn't~~
taken them, Mrs. Robinson would have
given all the money, and I was determined
~~she~~ shouldn't have them, if ~~I had had to~~ ~~they had~~
~~give~~ double. By the bye, love, the Robin-~~sons~~ ~~cost me~~
sons are friends of yours, I believe. Well,
my dear, I should be very sorry to say any-
thing uncharitable of a neighbour, if I knew
it; but, between ourselves, it's not all
gold that glitters there, they say."

“ I always heard, and ~~I~~ really do believe,”
said Blanche, getting, I could see, rather
fidgetty, “ that the Robinsons are most
excellent kind-hearted people.”

“ And exceedingly well connected,” added I.

“ Don't misunderstand me, my love; I

never heard a word against them, more than that Mrs. Robinson——

“ Was a governess, ~~you mean to say,~~ ”
interrupted Blanche, “ in Mr. Robinson’s family? True, and the daughter of a major, [✓] who lost his life fighting his country’s battles, leaving a large family of girls unprovided for. I think I should have done as she did, if I could—preferred gaining my own living to eating the bread of dependence.” ^{a/}

“ Don’t, pray, misunderstand me, dearest: I was not aware that Elizabeth Robinson is the daughter of a major; and I am sure, dear, if she is a friend of yours, that is quite enough for me, ~~you know~~; although I must say, I think she is any thing but a good manager: why, dear, just to shew you—she actually gave forty-five centimes for two the other pair of soles ~~in the market~~, which I had day, [✓] just refused for forty. How she manages, [✓] dear, with those eight poor children I cannot conceive, [✓] I know what it costs me with

of us,

only three ~~and~~ and there's no waste of any thing either. Why, my dear, to my certain knowledge, ~~she has had two new bonnets since~~ last Christmas, and I have made this ~~and~~ and my Leghorn do, with fresh trimmings and one pair of new strings, for eighteen months. I should go wild, dear, ~~to go on as some~~ *old things* ~~that~~ *should*, people do; but it's their affair, dear, not *ours.*"

"They say Robinson's income is not less than seven hundred a-year," ~~said~~ I; "and *observed* that, at the death of his uncle, he will come in for as much more."

"And so he ought," said Mrs. Waddlestern, "but it's no affair of mine—as people make their beds, so must they lie; only it would be as well for ~~those who~~ *some people* give themselves such airs occasionally, to bear in mind who other people are, and what they were themselves—that's all I mean. By-the-bye, too, I see you are as friendly as ever with poor Mr. Sanguine—*what an odd creature it is!*"

to go on as they do—not content with sittings at Goodasgold's, nothing will do you but a family pew lined and stuffed with purple and orange;

“ We have the greatest regard and respect for him,” replied Blanche; “ he is an odd creature, but his eccentricities do no prejudice to any one but himself.”

! “ Poor man, I really do pity him,” sympathized Mrs. Waddlestern, “ from the bottom of my heart. If there was any thing one could do for him, such as sending him now and then a little soup, or arrow-root, or —”

“ Not for the world!” exclaimed Blanche, taking it literally; “ it is with the greatest difficulty we can prevail on him to come in sometimes and take a cup of tea with us.”

so “ Poor creature! And I have heard too that he is ~~very~~ well connected; what a pity that some of his friends don’t give him a decent suit, it really makes my heart ache to see him with that wretched thread-bare coat shivering through the streets, ~~but he~~ and ~~is~~ so proud too. Is it true about his connexions? for everybody here is so highly

to his back; as if he hadn’t had a full meal for a fortnight — and seedy hat,

connected, that one never knows who is who?"

"Brother," said I, "of Sir Humphrey Sanguine, of Sanguine Hall, Notts, next heir to the baronetcy—that is all."

"Indeed? You astonish me! Can it be possible, and I so rude to pass him just now almost unnoticed; but I am so short-sighted. Do you think now he would be offended if I were to send him a little cherry-bounce, or some cheese-cakes, or a nice mould of jelly? or, now I think of it, we shall have a few friends on Tuesday evening, quite in a sociable way. Couldn't you prevail on him to accompany you?"

That would be delightful."

Blanche shook her head. I had my doubts; so it was determined that Mr. Sanguine should have the honour of a special invitation in due form, in a little triangular pink-scented note from Mrs. Waddlestern,

at length

Mrs. Waddlestern tore herself away.

written in Miss Rebecca Waddlestern's best hand.

“ What a very vulgar person, Tom !” said Blanche, as the door was closed.

“ One of Sanguine's prick-eared tribe, I imagine,” replied I.

“ And yet so highly connected, they say.”

“ Oh, we are all so highly connected, you know, in Boulogne.”

“ You were not displeased, Tom, dear, about the portrait, I hope? *I* can do a better one next time.”

“ Not at all displeased, Blanche, dear; but I think it was hardly worth your while to be in a pet about it ~~X~~ I should have treated it with the contempt it deserved.”

“ There I differ with you, dearest; *Mrs.* ~~X~~ *Waddlestern* is a dangerous person ~~X~~ there ~~X~~ are times, Tom, when silent contempt is not enough. *But what a calumny!* ~~X~~

December 28.—Blanche cannot get Mrs. Waddlestern and the ~~portrait~~ off her mind,

calumny

seemingly—she was full of it again this morning.

“ Do you know, Tom,” said she, “ I never could like that Mrs. Waddlestern ; she is always so busy about other people’s affairs, and lauding herself at the expense of her neighbours.”

“ Ignorance, dear,” replied I.

“ And a little malevolence too, ~~perhaps~~, Tom. She is so sly.”

“ Don’t you know, dear, that ignorant people generally make up by cunning, for want of knowledge. They are always drawing on their ingenuity, to conceal the defects of their understandings, and fancy they cheat others as they do themselves. As well try to turn a blackamoor white, as convince them of their ignorance: detect them in the grossest errors, and they will rack their inventions for any pretext for excuse, and, of course, lay the blame on any one, or any thing, but themselves; the more palpable

their ~~misunderstanding or their perversity~~, the more tenaciously will cunning and obstinacy be resorted to, to cover their ~~ignorance~~ ^{stupidity} ~~and justify their mal practices~~. Of course, it becomes another matter with ~~their prejudices~~, calumny, that shews, as you say, malevolence. One can pity ignorance, and be a match for it; but there is no fee so difficult to deal with as calumny. The only remedy, or, as Steel expresses it, 'the only way to draw forth the sting, is so to live as that it is not believed. He has consulted the old philosophers,' he says, 'on these points; some will be even with their detractors, and give the retort courteous.' Diogenes was very severe on one who persecuted him. 'Nobody will believe you,' said he, 'when you speak ill of me, any more than they would believe me, should I speak well of you.'

S "That is excellent!" exclaimed Blanche,
" but very severe, indeed."

"But he goes on," continued I, turning

Calumny is another sort of foe to dealt with.

to the passage, “he goes on to say—‘ Of all the sayings of the philosophers which I have gathered together for my own use, there are none which carry with them more candour and good sense than the two following ones of Plato. *—/* Being told that he had many enemies who spoke ill of him—‘ It is no matter,’ said he, ‘ I will live so that none shall believe them.’ Hearing again, that a friend had spoken detractingly of him, *—/* ‘I am sure,’ said he, ‘ he would not do it, if he had not some reason for doing so.’ This is the surest and noblest way of drawing the sting out of a reproach, and a true method of preparing a man for that great and only relief against the pains of calumny—a good conscience.”

8 “*But, Talking of* ^a *good conscience,” said* Blanche, rising and taking the volume from the shelf, “what can be more beautiful than this passage, Tom, from the sermon of Dr. South, so truly and feelingly shewing

the value of a clear conscience in the hour of death. It will not take me five minutes to read."

‘ The third and last instance in which, above all others, this confidence towards God does most eminently shew and exert itself, is at the time of death, which surely, & gives the grand opportunity of trying both the strength and worth of every principle. When a man shall be just about to quit the stage of this world, to put off his mortality, and to deliver up his last accounts to God ; at which sad time his memory shall serve him for little else but to terrify him with a frightful review of his past life, and his former extravagancies, stripped of all their pleasure, but retaining their guilt ; what is it then that can promise him a fair passage into the other world, or a comfortable appearance before his dreadful Judge, when he is there ? Not all the friends and interests, all the riches and honours under heaven, can speak

so much as a word *for* him, or one word of comfort *to* him in that condition ; they may possibly reproach, but they cannot relieve him. No, at this disconsolate time, when the busy tempter shall be more than usually apt to vex and trouble him, and the pains of a dying body to hinder and discompose him, and the settlement of worldly affairs to disturb and confound him, and, in a word, all things conspire to make his sick bed grievous and uneasy, nothing can there stand up against all these ruins, and speak life in the midst of death, but a clear conscience ; and the testimony of that shall make the comforts of heaven descend upon his weary head, like a refreshing dew, or shower upon a parched ground. It shall give him some lively earnest and secret anticipations of his approaching joy, it shall bid his soul go out of the body undauntedly, and lift up his head, with confidence, before saints and angels.

‘ Surely the comfort it conveys at this season, is something bigger than the capacities of mortality, mighty and unspeakable, and not to be understood till it comes to be felt. And now, who would not quit all the pleasures and trash and trifles which are apt to captivate the heart of man, and pursue the greatest rigours of piety, and the austerities of a good life, to purchase to himself such a conscience, as, at the hour of death, when all the friendships in the world shall bid him adieu, and the whole creation turns its back on him, shall dismiss the soul with that blessed sentence—“ Well done, thou good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord !”

“ Nothing can be finer, Blanche,” said I.

“ Is it not enough, Tom, as Steel says, ‘ to make the man’s heart burn within him,’ who reads it with due attention ?”

December 30.—“ I often think, Tom,” said Blanche, pensively, as she sat working,

and ungrateful

TOM THORNTON.

41

this morning, and talking of the scandal one is doomed to listen to at every turn, " how happily people might live if their dispositions would let them enjoy the blessings given them. Boulogne would be such a pleasant place, if people would let it. Man's wayward nature spoils everything, seemingly, it comes in contact with. Where nature has done her best to make all good and ~~hateful~~ beautiful, she is marred by the badness of ~~and boun~~ ~~affusions~~ man's ~~heart~~, which poisons the fountain of ~~z~~ life, every innocent enjoyment."

" So it is," I granted ; " ~~and more's the~~ ^{The universal plague spot} pity

Where the rose ever blossoms, the beams ever shine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine.

Paradise itself, dear, in the possession of some, would soon become a hell ; but thank Heaven, man's vaunted free will, his power, ambition, abilities and vain-glory, the sources and promoters of all his troubles, as well as his pride and ~~glory~~ on earth, shall have no

triumphs

entrance there. Heaven be praised, that he has no hand in the design and accomplishment of his own eternal welfare—his ambition had made even the abode of the saints unworthy of him."

"Tom, dear, you look ill to-day, I am —/ sure you are not well. I hope you are not thinking again too much?"

"A little pain in my side—that was all."

"Why did you not tell me, Tom, dearest, before I went out, and I would have called on Dr. Allerton; he always does you good; but I will write him a little note."

"Not yet—it was nothing, it would —/ go off."

"But I know better, Tom, and will have my own way. You have not looked like yourself, at all, since you supped at Mowbray's that night."

Blanche had hit the right nail—there was indeed a load at my heart, for which there was but one cure; but that cure, Allerton, had

he been a thousand times more skilful than he was, could not bestow. It was within my own reach alone ; why did I continue then to suffer ?

February 2.—You must not exert yourself too much, Tom, dearest," said Blanche, placing before me my pen and ink and papers, as I sat bolstered up in my chair ; " you are very weak, still, and must only write a very little to-day, while I go and see that your beef-tea is made as you like it."

Good, kind, thoughtful, and affectionate Blanche ! Would a man know the value of a good wife, it is in times of sickness and affliction she is best proved ; then shine forth her brightest, noblest attributes. In the brilliant salon she is, if such as thou, my beautiful Blanche, divine ; in the domestic circle, around the social hearths, an angel ; but it is in the chamber of affliction, in the hour of trial and tribulation, she is man's best ministering spirit—indeed divine.

A sick bed disposes the heart, ~~perhaps~~, more than aught else, to meditation and amendment. If I put in force but one half the good resolutions that a month's confinement to my chamber has called forth, I shall not have suffered in vain. It has been a sharp touch. I tell Allerton it is the heart, and that my mother died of it; but I can't get him to the point. He says "I must have a mind at ease, and then I shall have a heart at rest."

Allerton is a clever fellow, and versed in more things necessary to make a skilful physician, than the knowledge of the practice of physic. He studies human nature, no immaterial study for him who has to deal with the diseased mind as well as body, and he adapts his treatment to her various idiosyncracies, assisting, not forcing her, leading her with gentle entreaty rather than compulsion, safely through those pains and perils, in which she had sunk in less experi-

enced hands. He is in high feather to-day, because *The Times* has published his letter on Medical Reform, about which he takes great interest.

“ There,” said he, putting the paper in my hand just now; “ what think you of that? Now we have *The Times* with us, we shall go on swimmingly, sir. Sir James will have plenty of dirty work on his hands, I expect, and few thanks for his pains. At present, the members of the profession, Mr. Thornton, or rather the majority of them, are but a set of shopkeepers—jacks of all trades—they say. No more fat dinners at the Hall, no more convivial coffee-parties; henceforth, be it enacted, that no one dealing in drugs and chymicals shall be allowed to prescribe either as surgeon or physician; this will do the business ~~they say~~, and her Majesty’s lieges will cease to be drenched with coloured waters and other medicaments to pay that respectable, fast-driving

, say they,

functionary, the general practitioner. In France prescribing physicians and surgeons are not permitted to make any profit by the sale of the medicines they prescribe. The Apothecary's Act has degraded the profession to its present mean standing in public opinion. Let ~~them~~^{re} be properly educated men, competent to prescribe as surgeons and physicians, and druggists and chemists to dispense and prepare prescriptions, with standard rates of fees.

“But,” said I, “how are general practitioners, as they are called, to be dispensed with, particularly in the country?”

“You misunderstand me,” replied the Doctor, “I merely quote the opinions of others; I am, not of those, I assure you, who are carrying on a senseless warfare of abuse against the most active, and, as ~~the~~^T Times, says, ‘not the least intelligent members of the profession.’ ~~There~~ must always be the general practitioner; nor can his

It's all twaddle, sir; there

services be dispensed with, especially, as you say, in the rural districts. But read my letter, and tell me what you think of it to-morrow."

So highly do I approve of everything the doctor says and does, and with good reason, that, after the beef-tea, I shall while away an hour transcribing it for public edification, should these pages be fated ever to see the light. Now, then, for the doctor's letter.

To the Editor of THE TIMES.

SIR,—Although it may be presumption for a plain country 'jog-trot' like myself to contradict a great London M. D. I cannot for the life of me sit down calmly under the gratuitous abuses heaped on the unfortunate class of which for many of the junior years of my life, I was a humble member, by your correspondent. There are black sheep in most flocks, and it is a lamentable fact that M. D's will sometimes

by your correspondent

no less lamentable than indisputable

as well as

“sneak” for a guinea, ~~no less than~~ their humbler brethren of the same craft do for a crown. Clearly this is not as it ought to be, and Sir James Graham will have wrought a good work when he has purged the profession of all “sneaks” from top to bottom. But, sir, talk as they will against them, there must always be, in this country, the class ycleped general practitioners. In the rural districts especially, they are indispensable, where the mere prescribing surgeon or physician would be almost useless. The necessary medicines must be supplied by the attending practitioner, and if it be desirable to prevent the sale of medicaments by medical men, duly qualified to practice, they might easily be included in a certain fee to be charged for each attendance with advice. Thus no more physic than necessary would be given, nor is it at all likely that sufficient would be withheld on the score of saving; for continued con-

fidence would, of course, depend on continued success. The village doctor, sneer at him as they will, call him Jack-of-all-trades, or any other nickname illnature can invent, is still, if a competent and worthy man, a most useful and important member of society, and a blessing to those around him; nor can his place be supplied by the more high-minded, hot-pressed, satin-faced pure surgeon or college-trained physician. Men of their lofty aspirations would not do the arduous work the village doctor is called on night and day to perform; he is fitted by long usage for it—is not above it—he understands the poor, their ways and wants, and they are accustomed to, and satisfied with him, and better off, perhaps, in his hands, than though the Queen sent her own body physician to feel their pulses and prescribe for their distempers. There is a wide difference, sir, in the sort of man required in the metropolis, or the fashionable water-

ing place, and a country village, The The dons of May Fair would cut as sorry figures in the peasant's cottage, as poor plain pill garlic would at a crack consultation in Belgrave Square. Let Sir James Graham, sir, reflect on these things. One can fancy a court physician or a sergeant surgeon, conde- scending to prescribe, *in extremis*, a clyster; but who ever imagined the possibility of a pure surgeon or an immaculate M. D. stooping to administer the same?

&c. &c. &c.

8 February 3. ~~11~~ Blanche, dear, give me my papers, and stir the fire, I feel so cold to-day.

“You would write so much yesterday, Tom ~~11~~ I told you you would take cold. Ah, then, here comes Mr. Sanguine to have a chat; I am so glad ~~that is better a great deal than your writing before you have had your dinner~~”

“it does one good to see his honest face and hear his hearty laugh how different to that Plumley”

Mr. Sanguine entered bearing in his hand a covered jug enveloped in flannel.

“There, my boy,” said he, unwrapping it, and placing it carefully on the hob; “take that, and you may snap your fingers at the doctors.”

“Some of Lady Florence’s porridge, I declare,” said Blanche, peeping into the jug; “and excellent it smells ~~and~~ really, I think I must taste it, too.”

Mr. Sanguine’s eyes brightened.

“It is delicious! I will pour you out a cup full, Tom, it will warm you. How kind of you to think of him!” continued Blanche.

“It is medicine for the mind as well as ~~the~~ body,” said Mr. Sanguine; “it deserves a place in the three pharmacopœias ~~entre nous~~, I have serious thoughts of making a national affair of it some fine day.”

“It richly deserves it,” acquiesced I, handing the empty cup to my wife; “I declare I feel better already.”

smacking my lips and

"It was never known to fail, my dear madam; it has wrought more miracles than Saint Hubert himself ~~sucking babe, prime~~ of manhood, or tottering age—it's all one ~~—~~ Lady Florence's porridge cures them all. But how goes on the journal."

"So, so," said I.

"You cannot think how much happier he ~~better than dull care~~ has been," said Blanche, "since he had something to occupy his thoughts."

"'Tis a great blessing—that occupation of time," agreed Mr. Sanguine. ~~I waste a day in idleness, I say to myself~~ how many incidents worthy of record have I lost for ever ~~— how many opportunities for observation and improvement forfeited — how many salutary warnings disregarded — how much~~ that was worthy of my tenderest care and culture passed by unheeded? Did we but form a true estimate of the value of those many hours, days, nay, weeks and months, we often consume unprofitably, how much

*"Not a sadder spendthrift of it
once than Septimus Sanguine —
I couldn't bear the ticking of a clock;
now of*

they have offered us, but how little we have enriched ourselves from their stores ; did we but understand how pregnant is each moment with eventful interest to ourselves and those most dear to us, we should be wiser and far happier creatures than we are. But the hours glide unproductively away ; though they fill up the sum of our brief existence, we hardly care to take note of their passage, though each bring with it some new tale, some fresh record, some inevitable truth, on which may hang the most momentous issues—the vital question of our eternal happiness or woe."

"Yes," added Blanche, with ~~deep~~ emotion, kindling as the words fell from Mr. Sanguine's lips ; "so it is, till the last dark hour arrives ; then, alas ! how many would gladly give all this world affords them for yet a few more of those oft-neglected moments to be added to their last scene here ; as if the deeds of a misspent life could be

some lesson, some kindly warning,
some necessary knowledge

54

TOM THORNTON.

—/ atoned for the growth of three score years
—/ and ten in such brief space."

"True, true," assented Mr. Sanguine.

"~~There~~ is not an hour passes of our lives, of
that we may be sure, the dullest, or seemingly,
the least propitious, but affords, if rightly
used, some excellent opportunity ~~for~~ ~~some~~
~~knowledge~~ of what we are and ought to be,
a foundation yet vouchsafed us on which to
build our noblest hopes."

"There are so many definitions of happiness," said I. "How understand them; how
best attain a knowledge of the ~~science~~ ^{right one?}"

"You mean to say," replied Mr. Sanguine, "how few understand the ~~science~~,
~~for science it is~~, of living a good life, and,
therefore, a happy one? Parents, I think,
may take much blame to themselves who
are at so little pains to teach their children
the true methods of happiness, for their
must be method in all human joys, for con-
tinuance; high flights, romantic soarings,

rationale

will carry us beyond our mark, and end in disappointment. Ask nine youths out of ten about to be launched into the world, their definition of happiness, and their answers will make you sad if you wish them well. Honors, riches, though heaped to overflow, will ~~do nought~~ without the knowledge how to use them. Yes, there ~~is a~~ ^{must be} system, ~~a~~ method, ~~a~~ science, ~~if you will,~~ in all happiness—all worldly happiness, any ~~for con-~~ false views of, or deviations from which, ~~tinuance,~~ must end in disappointment."

"There is a great deal in disposition," observed Blanche, "and turn of mind ~~the~~, ^{I should} ~~same~~ rules would hardly apply in every ~~think~~ case."

"The fundamental rules would be the same, I think," replied Mr. Sanguine, "and be generally applicable. ~~I grant that a~~ ~~correct knowledge of the disposition, when~~ ~~young, is essential for its judicious guidance~~ ~~and correction.~~ I have often thought, if

~~A correct knowledge, if attainable~~
~~in early life of the disposition, with~~
~~a view to its judicious guidance and~~
~~correction is, I grant, an essential desideria-~~
~~rum~~

you can't do better than

you want to know a boy's disposition, make him turn out his breeches' pockets."

"His breeches' pockets?" cried Blanche; "what a spectacle!"

"What profanation!" added I.

"Yes—his breeches' pockets," continued Mr. Sanguine, smiling: "did it never occur to you how you might form a pretty correct guess of your boy's turn of mind, better than by all the bumps on his skull, by the contents of his pockets? Just consider."

"Surely, Mr. Sanguine, it never entered the mind of the legislature," laughed Blanche, evidently pleased, by diverting the conversation into a more cheerful vein, to afford me some amusement, knowing the *turn* ~~taste~~ for the ludicrous which our excellent friend was disposed to indulge in sometimes, when in the humour—"that anything so sacred as a boy's pockets should be invaded by the curious and inquisitive, or some law would most certainly have been framed to

forbid such an outrage on all sense of private decency and decorum?"

"But as no law is to be found, that I know of," contended Mr. Sanguine, "properly applicable to the case in question on the statutes at present; though I may bring all the school boys in England upon me, for such a treasonable conspiracy against their vested rights and interest, let us run all risks, and take a peep into the pockets of—let us say Master Thomas Thornton, renowned, no doubt, like every other boy, for his antiquarian relish for all sorts of odds and ends, curious scraps and scrapings, and heterogeneous accumulations. First, then, for a list of articles in Master Thomas Thornton's right breeches' pocket, a ~~h~~ack-knife—lollipop—three-half-pence—peg-top—rusty old key. Articles in the left pocket—gingerbread-nuts—rotten apple—fish-hooks—an old ballad—pocket-handkerchief, somewhat soiled—brandy-balls—flue, and dust."

"Was there no flue and dust in the right pocket?" inquired Blanche.

concealment, all open, frank, unsuspicious, to be watched, as tending to carelessness. And now for the left pocket, gingerbread-nuts, shewing a warm complexion and a love of fun, to be regulated, and if necessary, restrained by proper antidotes; rotten apple —token of forgetfulness and procrastination, with a disposition for hoarding, in keeping with the odd halfpenny in the other pocket, not to be encouraged to a miserly extent, ~~accumulat~~ but suggestive of ~~wealth~~; fish-hooks—cruelty and luscious tastes are boon companions, the greatest epicures fondest of the “gentle art;” this tendency to indolence and oily things should be narrowly watched; old ballad—proclaiming a leaning for theatricals and catch clubs, draught stout and devilled kidneys; pocket-handkerchief, somewhat soiled—as no one ever saw a boy with a clean one, and, as it performs many more duties than that for which ~~it is intended~~, it is impossible to draw from it any certain

nature intended it,

wantonly

prognostics, so we will not hazard any gratuitous speculations thereon, nor hold it up for closer inspection, but leave it unexplored, at all events till after the next wash ; brandy-balls—having an early eye to creature comforts within due limits is nowhere disallowed, that I know of, although it has been a question of moment among those entrusted with the moral culture of the rising generation, whether the fatal relish for spirituous drinks may not have had its origin in the extensive introduction of brandy-balls into our public schools and seminaries, although it has never been positively proved that a drop of alcohol enters into the composition of those favourite little delicacies. Be this as it may, it is best always to be on the safe side, and, as a rule, to limit Master Tommy to not more than three dozen a day ; if any ill effects followed, then to insist on their discontinuance, and substitute in their stead, half-a-

a dietary thereon

pound of the gin-candy, which is making, they say, a great stir in the finishing academies for young ladies at the west-end.

Flue and dust—nothing remains but the flue and dust; but there let us pause before we presume to venture further. There is something sacred in old relics of whatever name or description, which, as a bit of an antiquary myself, I hold in fit and proper awe, and will, therefore, not think of disturbing to satisfy all the middling sweep-cleans in Christendom. So, now having turned out Master Tommy's pockets, which may serve as a sample of all other boys whatever, throughout the length and breadth of the land, all I can say to you further is this, that, when Tommy really comes, and is old enough to wear breeches, if you desire to know his true character, and what will be his fortune in the world—consult neither fortune-teller nor phrenologist, but those best of all oracles, his pockets, and, that you

*makes his appearance
in propria persona,*

may arrive at safe conclusions, be sure the tailor makes them deep enough."

A hearty laugh followed this unceremonious *exposé* of poor Tommy's vested rights and interests.

"Nay," insisted Blanche, as Mr. Sanguine rose to take his leave; "you must positively stay and take your dinner with us snugly to-day, now do, to please me."

"Couldn't, 'pon honour; my girl has some hot sausages and mashed potatoes on purpose for me to-day—the anniversary of my wedding-day; and it would go near to break her heart if I disappointed her; but, another time, another time." Mr. Sanguine had closed the door, but suddenly opening it again and putting his head in, while he held the handle in his hand—"Have you heard the news?" said he; "I forgot to tell you, Mowbray is arrested."

"Arrested?" faltered I, almost dumb-

— we've got some of your favorite poached eggs and bacon, and a sweet omelet—

struck, and feeling the blood ~~forsake my~~
~~face~~—“ when, where, by whom ? ”

“ In London, they say a day or two ago ;
but don’t let that surprise you, it’s only
what everybody expected ~~at~~ *au revoir !* By
the bye, I’ll bring the receipt for the por-
ridge next time ~~at~~ adieu ~~at~~ adieu ! ”

February 5.—“ A pity he takes things
so sensitively,” said Allerton, as they stood
talking by my bedside yesterday ; “ if he
concerns himself so much about every fast
fellow that runs into the constable’s arms,
like Mowbray has done, he will have enough
to trouble him here.”

“ He *is* so sensitive,” replied Blanche.
“ I think he rather liked Mowbray, and has
often warned him how he would smart for
it, if he would go on playing as he does.”

“ A foolish fellow,” responded Allerton ;
“ he might have been worth his three thou-
sand a year at this moment, but for his
excessive greenness : they say he kicked

down best part of fifty thousand before he came of age ; warnings were utterly useless."

" Where are Plumley and O'Hara ? I have not seen either of them for a fortnight," ~~said~~ I.

asked " In Paris, I believe."

" Don't you think they will be sure to inquired help him all they can ?" ~~said~~ Blanche, innocently.

" That is no part of the contract, I conceive," replied the Doctor ; " and if it were, it would be a forlorn hope to trust to, I take it ; those Messrs. Plumleys and O'Haras are slippery sort of folks to deal with."

" I am so thankful," exclaimed Blanche, " that Tom was never drawn into any of their horrible ~~money~~ transactions !"

" You cannot be too much so," agreed the Doctor.

A deep groan from the bottom of my heart, brought them again to my bedside.

“ What is the matter ?—answer me, Tom, dearest,” entreated my wife, bending over me, and applying some eau de cologne to my temples ; “ are you still in pain ?”

“ I will go now,” said Allerton, “ and send him a composing draught ; there is something weighing on his mind, I think ; if we can give him a few hours uninterrupted sleep, he will be better.”

Blanche sat down by the bedside.

“ You must not take things so much to heart, Tom,” she said, holding my hand in hers ; “ you feel very much, no doubt, and so do I, for poor Mowbray ; but, you know, he never would take warning—nothing seemed to teach him wisdom. It was his own fault, alone ~~and~~ this is not the first time, they say, that the same thing has happened.

“ Surely it cannot be Plumley or O’Hara that have done it ?” said I ; “ the bill is not yet due.”

“ Bill, Tom—what bill, dear ?”

Those terrible bills are sure to end in this way some day, Sanguine says—the day of reckoning must come at last.

, which he lost to Plumley that night."

" Oh ! a bill that he gave them for the
seventy pounds, you know ?

?

" Indeed, you did not tell me. No, no, then, that cannot be it—they never would be such villains, Tom. Thank Heaven, dearest, that you had resolution enough never to be mixed up in any of their ~~terri~~
~~ble~~ bill affairs, which bring so many to ruin. Do you feel faint, still, dear ? Take a little of this camphor and lavender, it will revive you. There, we will not talk any more about it, now."

frightful

" Didn't Allerton say Plumley was in Paris ?" asked I.

" Yes, for I was wondering what had become of him ; he has not been here, Tom, since the day you went out snipe-shooting with George Fleetwood, when I thought I should never get rid of him."

" I must write to him immediately," said I.

" Why, dear—what about ?"

“ Oh, about Mowbray ; perhaps I can be of service to him.”

“ How, dear ?”

“ To get him time, if they are pressing him.”

“ True, true ; you might help him, perhaps, in that way.”

“ There is no time to lose—the bill will be due in a few days.”

“ Well, you shall write, then, by and by, if you are well enough ; but now, you must be quiet till your draught comes, and after you have had some sleep, we will talk about it.”

There was a long mutual silence, during which Blanche sat reading out of Aunt Lucy’s ‘ best gift.’ “ How true, how beautiful !” she exclaimed, closing the book, and regarding me with a look of deep affection.

“ What is true ? what is beautiful ?” asked I.

“ I was in hopes you were dozing, Tom,”

she replied ; “ these words which I have been reading, are they not ^{beautiful} ? ”

— / ‘ My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.’

And again, Tom—

‘ For man also knoweth not his time : as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.’

“ God help us, Blanche ! ” I ejaculated.

“ Amen, Tom, amen ! ”

There was a gentle knock at the door.

“ Come in,” said Blanche ; “ ah ! the composing draught ; now, then, you must try and get some sleep ; ” and drawing round the curtains, and placing the hand

, under the effects of the opiate,

bell within reach, I soon fell into profound oblivion of all mundane affairs.

February 8th.—This suspense is dreadful. How many of our troubles are self-sought ~~This might all have been spared~~ ^{greatest} me if I had listened rather to the convictions of reason—for my senses are my accusers—than to impulse and the ~~seductive~~ ^{senseless} dictates of goodnature. Oh, what fools are they, who, setting at nought ~~every precept~~ ^{all considerations} of duty and common sense, are slaves to the gratification of every impulse of feeling and sympathy ~~who, to save from impending ruin some false friend, seal by one fatal act, not only their own, but the ruin of those who have the first and best claim to their support!~~ ^{alive only to present emotions,} Yes, it is the departure from ~~the strict line of duty—the giving way to~~ ^{protection and} morbid feelings and sympathies, that hurls so many of us into ruin. One false step, ~~one inconsiderate deviation from the path of duty, into what an endless train of~~ ^{wrecks} ~~that straight, plain, unerring line of~~ ^{and might have been avoided by} a little forethought and resolution.

troubles and miseries does it plunge us, and out of which no repentance or amendment may be able to extricate us; and ~~oh~~ how acute is the pang of reflection, when the voice of reason regains its sway, and we are made sensible how richly we merit the sorrows which our own folly alone has brought upon us. The world may forget and forgive, but the blow has been struck—the iron has entered into the soul; and though we may rise, apparently uninjured and superior to fortune's frowns, the spirit, self-humbled, self-accused, can never forget its defeat; nor can philosophy, though it may teach resignation, restore to its original unsullied brightness a tarnished fame. When saw you ever the man, the victim of self-sought ~~misfortune~~, be its nature what it may, tread the earth with a light buoyant step, and gaze joyously on the bright sky as he walked? Is there not a sadness in his every movement? do not his steps fall heavy

humiliation,

and measured ~~are~~ are not his eyes cast down-
ward, and his brow ~~is~~, how clouded by
anxious thoughts ~~X~~ He is thinking of the
past—of what he once was, the days for
ever gone; and though you bid him be
comforted and ~~be~~ of good cheer—though
you restore to him all he once most prized
of this world's possessions, you plead in
vain—the iron has entered into his soul,
and for ever usurped, in this life ~~that~~ *at least*,
pride, that peace, which once reigned there.
Experience may be bought too dear, and
wisdom, thus acquired, is a costly purchase
indeed, if ~~to~~ to attain it, is encountered the
wreck of all a man holds most dear in this
world—his fame, his fortune, ~~his health~~, his
self-respect, and peace of mind.

Eight o'clock, p. m. and no answer yet
from Plumley to my letter, requesting to
know immediately if Mowbray has provided
for the bill, and, if not, that he will lose
no time in communicating with him, ~~that I~~

~~may be spared any inconvenience~~, as he well knows the promises under which I was alone induced to be a party to it, and my utter inability to meet it, under any circumstances, at present.

February 19th — Ten o'clock, a. m.—No letter yet, though three days since I wrote. My mind is racked with anxiety, every knock or ring sends the blood to my heart. I go skulking about like a thief, afraid of my own shadow. I dare not look my wife in the face—she seems to read my thoughts. *Her mercers have* been twice to press for payment of their account, about six pounds, and other applications this morning—there is something in the wind—my heart forebodes evil.

“ Tom, dear,” said Blanche to me, when I had got rid of the mercer, “ why did you ever buy me those horrid things? *I have* never put them on my back—they make my heart sink whenever I look at them ; do

you think they would take them back again, Tom? then we should not have to pay for them."

"That would never do," insisted I; "already there are suspicions afloat, or we should not be dunned so ~~much~~ Lemonkey, the tailor, and Madame Lejuif have just been here, and the people from the pork shop— you must go and pay *them* directly; Lejuif and Lemonkey ~~say they will wait.~~ *have promised* ~~to wait.~~"

"We have only three hundred and fifty francs left, Tom; shall I go and pay the mercers? they are such uncivil people; I never pass the shop but I fancy Madame has her eyes on me."

"If you pay her, Blanche, all the others will come on me, as sure as fate; and remember we have to wait two months nearly before we touch ~~the next quarterage.~~ *another shilling*"

"I will go then and see Madame, Tom, and try and arrange it."

"I have tried my best, Tom," said my

poor wife, returning anxious and harassed, & from her wretched errand; "but Madame is so unaccommodating ~~x~~ she declared she — must be paid immediately—the account was over-due nearly three weeks, and she would wait no longer." I offered to pay half, but 'all or none,' she said: ~~x~~ oh, Tom, — what are we to do?"

"Heaven only knows," said I.

Six o'clock, p.m.—The dark cloud is gathering around us. A letter at last from Plumley, expressing his great surprise and concern to hear of Mowbray's misfortune, especially as the bill has passed out of his hands, and he fears, as the time is so short, it is impossible to trace it; but he will try what he can do. ^{Never} questioning for a moment, he says, Mowbray's ability to meet it when due, he parted with it without thought to a merchant in the way of business, and it must be met in the regular way; but perhaps it might be arranged so

as to save me any trouble, by accepting another bill for the amount at two months, with interest, and a bonus for the accommodation. If I liked he would endeavour to see a party, who, by his recommendation, he thought might advance the money. He is only sorry that, from some heavy pulls on him just now, he cannot do it himself, at all events, I shall hear from him, if possible, in the course of a day or two.

And the bill will be presented to-morrow
—Oh, Plumley, Plumley! can it be, as
Blanche says, that thou hast a black heart
beneath that flowered waistcoat?

*February 10.—Blanche gone, driven by
terror and agitation, to consult with the
Robinson's what is best to be done. My*

*heart is lighter, the dark cloud is gathering
thicker and thicker, but I have ceased
to tremble at its approach. She knows all
—the worst has passed, I have unburthened
my heart of the load that was crushing*

What words can depict the

76

TOM THORNTON.

it ; now I can await with courage and resolution the coming storm ; would that its fury had to burst on me alone ! ~~But~~ ^B He will be her helper and deliverer, ~~who never forsaketh his own.~~

~~Never can I forget the~~ look of unutterable grief and pity and devoted love, ~~that~~ ^A met the confession of my unworthiness.

“ Tom, dearest,” said she, sitting down by my side, and taking my hand in hers, as I lay almost stupified on the sofa, brooding over Plumley’s letter, “ you have not been out for some days ; you want change of air ; to-morrow we will take a drive to Wimborne, and ask Alice Faulkner to go with us. You never looked so pale and thin and care-worn, Tom, as now. ^A I am sure, Tom, you are fretting about something that you will not tell me ; nay, I have thought so for some time past—your manner is so altered ; you never care to hear me read, or sing, or play to you now, as you used to do ; your

and have a snug little dinner at the Golden Heart, and a ramble over the village and bring some new-laid eggs home with us.

~~conceal or disguise any thing
from me? ~~yes, I am sure you
are not unhappy.~~~~ TOM THORNTON. 77

appetite is gone; you do not rest at night; there is nothing seems to give you pleasure now. Is it about Aunt Lucy or Henrietta, you think so much? No, then what is it that makes you so unhappy? Why not ~~make me your confidant?~~ If you have care

~~and~~ sorrow, if I cannot remove, by sharing ~~them~~, I may help you, Tom, to bear them.

~~yes~~, I am sure there is something weighing on your mind. Oh, Tom! if you love me as you say you do, and as I believe you do, why conceal aught from me? Yes, there are tears in your eyes—you weep! then I know that you are unhappy, and you do not think me worthy of your confidence. Hark! how my heart beats at every sound! Hark! yes, it is the post! Ah, a letter, I declare, from Paris, for you Tom, what can it be about? From Plumley, no doubt—may I see what he says? Poor Mowbray, I hope he can do something for him! What is the matter,

Indeed, Tom

— a Tom, dear? *Answer me*; you frighten me
dearest, — Tom, speak, *speak*!"

" There, then," said I, putting the letter in her hand? " now you know all."

" Ah!" exclaimed she, turning deadly pale, as she glanced rapidly over the paper; " what is this—do my eyes deceiye me? " I —/ —
 — cannot help you, the bill must take its course, I hope you will meet it to prevent unpleasant consequences, perhaps something may be arranged afterwards, if attended with any inconvenience, no doubt Mowbray will make it all right by and by —/ —

The paper dropped from her hand as she sunk paralyzed on her chair.

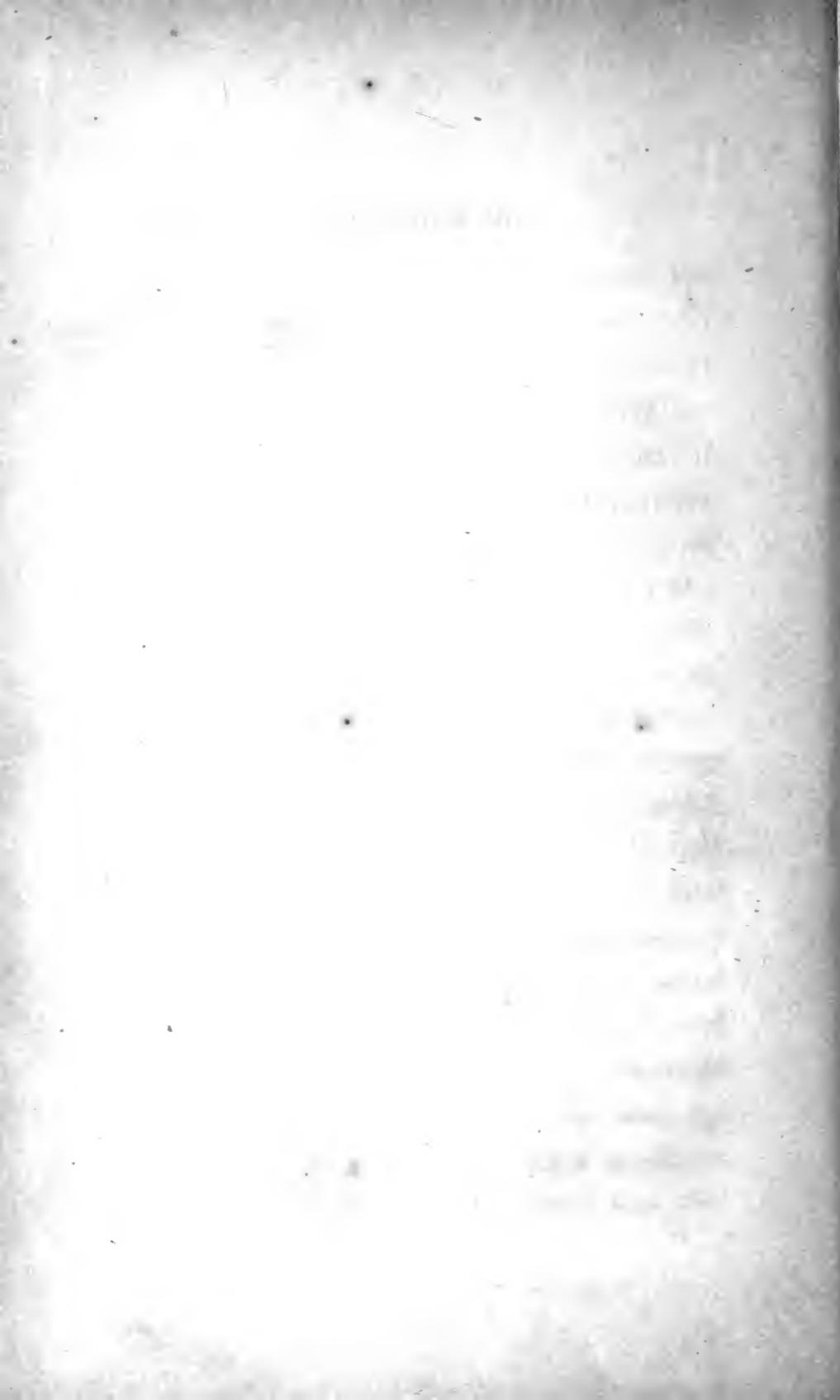
" Blanche, dearest Blanche!" cried I, supporting her head on my bosom; " can you forgive me?"

" Forgive you? yes, yes, Tom! " would — that my forgiveness were all you needed; to-morrow, then, would dawn on us without a cloud!"

what misery has my folly and inconsiderateness brought on us! —

“ What is to become of us?” said I, mingling my tears with hers; “ the last resource has failed.”

“ No, no, Tom,” sobbed she, throwing her arms round my neck; “ we have not yet tried the last—there, there,” pointing to Aunt Lucy’s ‘best gift;’ “ that shall be the last resource—a resource that *never* fails.”



PART III.

JOURNAL.

CONTINUED.

Maison d'Arret.

February 14.—The blow has been struck—staggered, stunned, overwhelmed, I am fallen, cast down, bruised, utterly beaten. Had its fury descended on me alone, it had been nothing; with time and patience and resignation, the wound might have been healed, although it left an indelible scar behind; but in its fury it has crushed the innocent with the guilty, the meek, enduring, unoffending, with the haughty and rebellious spirit. Oh, Blanche, Blanche, thou hast deserved better of me than this!

Is this the return I make thee, for all thy
love and care and goodness? Fool, wretched-
ed, weak, inconsiderate fool, that I have
been! ~~And~~ where is the profit of all my
labour? [“] Whatsoever mine eyes desired I
kept not from them; I withheld not my
heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced
in all my labour; and this is my portion of
all my labour.” When I look back—for
memory is never idle with the wretched—
and call to mind the events of my past life,
full of pains and reproaches as they have
been, oh, how acute is the sting! But the
more I reflect, the more I see and humbly
acknowledge, ~~however~~ just are the ways of
Providence ^{that} all the happiness or misery
I have experienced in life has been the re-
sult solely of my own well or ill doings, my
own forethought or wilful blindness, the fruit
sweet or bitter, of my own prudence or ne-
glect ^{that} the opportunity has been given
me to do well, to be prosperous, respect-

whether

ed, happy, if I would, and that ~~I~~ I failed or succeeded, the dispensations of God are the same, ever just, ever merciful; that none are fated to destruction; but that man's pride and self-will are the ~~true~~ pitfalls which poor, blind, headstrong, reckless, human nature lays for its own downfal.

Oh, let a man, above all things, have a right knowledge of the things that conduce to his peace! In the sunshine and heyday of youth, when all looks bright and promising, he may put aside the thought, for perhaps the dark day is yet afar off; but it may come when he least expects or is prepared for it, and bring with it a reckoning that must be settled—settled without delay—without the abatement of an atom. Let him not put off, till that dark day, the work of reformation and amendment; for though his best intentions be awakened, and his sincerest resolutions made in time of

danger and affliction, He only knows who can read the heart, whether, if further time were given, those resolutions would be as fruitless and transitory as they had ever proved before; perhaps, were longer time vouchsafed, which in mercy is denied, it might but add to the catalogue of those sins which are already “ red as scarlet, and more in number than the hairs of his head.” We resolve on the necessity of self-examination and a reformed life, when the hand of affliction is laid on us, and sorrows and calamities separate us from the world; the heart is then humbled, and bows in obedience to its God and judge, and precious are the tears of true contrition and repentance; but when the dark cloud has passed by, and those tears are dried, and the bright sunshine of hope and expectation again bursts forth with undiminished splendour, time alone shall shew our steadfastness; and well for those to whom the warning has not been sent in vain.

sincerity

February 15.—Hark! how slowly, how
dismally the iron tongue of time tells the
dreary hours as they drag on; and yet there
must be an end to the most wretched as
well as to the happiest day—that is a com-
fort! Ah, philosophy—philosophy! talk as
they will of resignation, human patience,
even with hope smiling on it, is but a frail
support. How often has hope indulged the
delusive dream, since I became the tenant of
this dismal chamber, that every day would
be the last, and how often has that thought
quelled the murmuring spirit! But time still
rolls on, and, with its lapse, the rays of hope
seem to grow fainter and fainter, and to be
fading away into impenetrable gloom and
darkness; but the spirit must philosophize—
it must have some support to lean upon.
To-morrow—to-morrow—oh, that never-
failing trust in to-morrow! when the glo-
rious sunshine shall for ever dispel the clouds
and mists and dark shadows of ~~despair~~! *today.*

*again
burst forth and*

O ye happy sons of freedom! who, breathing the pure air of Heaven unrestricted, know not the value of the blessings ye enjoy, would ye appreciate how gladsome it is to bound along the green sward, to gaze on the bright sky's boundless expanse—to bask beneath its blessed light and warmth—to roam at will over hill and dale, through wood and meadow—to know no master but your own free inclinations, no keeper, no *concierge* but your consciences, come and become the tenant of this lonely chamber—pass but one sleepless night within its stone walls and iron-barred door and window, and ye will know, as ye have never known before, the blessedness of liberty, nor deem the poor prisoner selfish, if indeed you ever cast a thought on him, or chance to hear of him, or read his journal, if it be little else than a history of his griefs. The pent-up heart would break if it did not sometimes note down its wrongs,

and so find vent for its complainings—it is its only solace; so night after night he takes his pen, and as he adds to the record of his sufferings, the spirit is unburthened, and sleep, that surest balm for earthly woes, refuses not its friendly aid to nerve him for the trials of the morrow.

February 16.—Though but a week has passed since the day when I was torn from my home like a thief, it seems to me an age. How difficult it ~~often~~ is to realize those things which we know to be realities! If sudden joy or affliction fall on us—the unexpected acquirement of riches or honours, or, on the contrary, the loss of fortune and friends—the compulsory change of circumstances—the death of a beloved relative—the wreck of our fondest hopes and calculations, we say it is a dream—we cannot, we will not, believe it to be true. Though the certain evidences of its reality stare us in the face—the smiles and congratulations of

*in moments of this life's sorest trials,
when the mind, ~~seems~~ paralised and
deadened, has lost all control over itself,*

our acquaintances—the world's applause, when fortune smiles, or, to reverse the picture, we gaze distracted on the insignia of death—the hearse—the sable plumes—the mourning coach—the tears that are flowing around us, though we see the coffin that holds the form of the beloved one lowered into the grave, and join in the prayers for its eternal rest, it is still the same—we say it is a dream, we cannot, we will not believe that it is true: so when I gaze around me, and every object tells me the fearful truth that I am a prisoner, driven, by my own fatal follies, from my home, and all that home holds dearest to me—that iron-clasped door—those cold stone walls—that heavily-barred window, my brain burns—I see it all too vividly apparent, I rush to my bed, and, burying my face in my hands, exclaim—“ No, no, it cannot—it cannot be true—it is a dream—a fearful dream! I will not—I dare not believe that it is true!”

For six wretched nights that pillow has been wetted with my tears; still I cannot realize the terrible fact that I am indeed a prisoner separated from the world—shut out from society—torn from my home, my wife, from every tie that makes life happy—still it seems a dream! that harrowing scene—it haunts me like a spectre! What language can depict my sensations, when, waking feverish and unrefreshed, I found Blanche already dressed, ready to go out, and watching anxiously by my side. I saw she had been weeping.

“ What o’clock is it ?” said I, dreading lest the morning had far advanced while I slept.

“ Just struck nine, dear ; I did not like to wake you.”

“ Is it so late ?” said I ; “ has any one been here yet ?”

“ Not a soul, Tom, this morning. We

must do something, dear, about the bill ; there is no time to lose."

" It is too late now, Blanche ; it will no doubt be presented to-day ? What *can* I do ?"

" Surely, Tom, they will grant a few days ? Sanguine says they will."

A hopeless sigh was my only answer.

" I have been thinking, Tom, what you must do ; what indeed you ought to do, and do too, immediately—write to Henrietta to intercede with Aunt Lucy in your behalf. Confess everything—throw yourself on her generosity ; and, if she love you ~~only~~ as a ~~—~~ sister, you will not ask in vain."

A gleam of hope flashed across my breast —yes, that resource was left—I would throw myself on Henrietta's generosity.

" There is not a moment to lose, Tom ; oh, how happy we shall be now ! Stay, I will get you the pen and ink—there, then it ~~—~~ will soon be done. Conceal nothing ~~—~~ tell the ~~—~~

that out of this evil—if we are true to ourselves and make the best atonement we can—good will come?
TOM THORNTON. 91

truth, the whole truth, that is always the best way; Aunt Lucy cannot be insensible to such an appeal; and who knows, Tom, but ~~that happier days are soon coming for~~ us. Let me see—yes, yes, that is beautiful!

Now, then, seal and direct it, and I will go and put it in the post myself. I shall not be gone ten minutes; and then we will have such a happy breakfast; and afterwards, Tom, dear, ~~let us go~~ we will—

“Hark!” said I, as the street-door bell was pulled violently; “who is that?” can that be?

“Perhaps the Doctor, or Mr. Sanguine,” faltered Blanche, turning pale as ashes, and listening attentively.

“It is not their step,” said I, rising from the bed, and throwing on a wrapping-gown; “hark! there is some one in the passage—men’s voices.”

“They are coming up stairs—hark! they are asking for you, Tom; I will go and

, that will do—that is beautiful—
how happy Henrietta will be!

—/ speak to them, I will explain everything to them, do not fear, Tom, I will——”

Poor unhappy Blanche! if it depended on what thou then wouldest have done, if thou couldst, ours, indeed, would have been a blissful lot; and this thy severest trial had been spared thee. //

She had reached the door, pale and trembling with agitation, when it was suddenly thrown open, and four men entered the room. Huissier Halley followed by the Commissaire de Police, and two of their tools bringing up the rear. I was not left a moment in any doubt as to the purport of their visit. //

“ Monsieur Thornton, I believe?” politely inquired Halley, and making me a low bow.

Having silently signified my assent, for I was too agitated to trust to my voice, while Blanche stood almost paralyzed with terror by my side—“ I am instructed, Monsieur Thornton,” continued Halley,

glancing over some papers in his hand, "to apply to you for payment of one hundred and sixty francs, due to Messieurs Bruin & Co."

Staggered with surprise and indignation
I stood motionless.

"Do you acknowledge the debt?" asked the Commissaire, thinking, perhaps, that Halley had not made himself sufficiently understood.

"Yes," replied I, "I have never disputed or refused to pay it."

"Are you prepared to pay it now?" demanded Halley.

I looked at my wife—"Yes," I replied; "but wherefore this extraordinary treatment?"

Monsieur Halley condescended no reply, but was busily engaged summing up the amount total with costs, when Sanguine entered hurriedly, and whispered to me "to beware, for arrest the second was waiting

outside, as soon as I had dispatched the first."

“ Stay,” said I, “ that alters the case,” endeavouring to assume an air of indifference for the sake of my poor wife.

Halley, I suppose, had overheard us, or guessed the truth.

“ But you will have time,” suggested he, “ to get away, to step into the country, and who is to prevent your taking a trip to Calais, Monsieur Thornton? and once there —you comprehend? On my conscience,” urged he, seeing me looking doubtful, “ I would, if I were in your place, pay Messrs. Bruin & Co. and bolt.”

I had stood undecided, I must admit, for a moment, especially as the Commissaire’s face seemed to betoken indications of sympathy with my situation. It might have been only the nervous twitching of his moustache; but there certainly was a look in the Commissaire’s face as if he would

have whispered bolt, if he dared. I say I had stood for an instant in two minds, whether to give myself up like a martyr, or run for it like a thief, when the word conscience fairly settled the point. Monsieur Halley's achievements in his peculiar line were notorious, even the two scamps, who stood brushing the brims of their hats with their greasy coat cuffs, ~~could not~~ help grinning *couldn't* outright. It was too good a joke—Monsieur Halley's conscience!—it was too much! The Commissaire turned suddenly towards the window, and had ~~immediate~~ occasion for his handkerchief; the men fairly chuckled; and even Halley himself was at least two minutes before he could face the company and proceed to business.

“Have you determined, then, Monsieur,” said he, at length, resuming his usual collectedness; “we wait for your decision.”

“You need wait no longer,” said I; “my

extraordinary

decision is to accompany you to the Haute Ville."

Oh, what a change came over the scene ! In a moment the Commissaire was himself again, recalled all the dignity of which he was capable, fumbled nervously with his sash, and, to indemnify himself, no doubt, for his momentary relaxation ~~of~~ official consequence, looked daggers at the two subs, and commenced spitting vehemently into the fire-place. As to Halley, for once in — his life he was fairly nonplussed.

“ Then you refuse to pay this ? ” said he, pointing to the paper in his hand.

“ Where would be the use,” replied I, “ when in five minutes I should be nabbed by Huissier No. 2 ? ”

I might have said in less than a minute, for scarcely were the words out of my mouth, when in rushed Huissier Marline, with warrant the second.

Blanche stood clinging to my arm, a

~~Blanche stood clutching me,~~
terror stricken and livid as death,

making a desperate effort

TOM THORNTON.

97

silent spectator of what passed ; but I could see the conflict working within her. I implored Sanguine by looks not to leave her—he understood me.—“Beaucoup de monde, aujourd’hui, Messieurs,” said I, ~~and~~ ~~deavouring~~, for her sake to look as unconcerned as possible ; ^{as} ~~asseyez~~ ^{you}, Messieurs, je serai prêt toute de suite.”

A low bow acknowledged the Messieurs deep sense of Monsieur’s courtesy.

But wherefore recall to mind thoughts,
 which, oh, how gladly I would banish if I could, for ever from my memory ! Why dwell on a scene, which treat it now lightly as I may, strikes like a dagger to my heart whenever I reflect upon it. It was indeed a sad and heart-rending one—my wife’s terror and amazement when she found that we must part, her alternate grief and rage, her piteous tears, her last agonizing appeal to hearts, even had they possessed the power she seemed, poor thing ! in the extremity of

her anxiety to hope they had ~~not~~ harder than
this stone floor—her parting embrace—her
piercing scream, as they bore me from her
arms—the disconsolate face and indignant
gestures of my faithful Sanguine—all, all
are ever present to my mind, never to be
effaced ! *never*

Often had I heard and read of such scenes
of misery, of such partings between husband
and wife, and parents and fond children, and
thought I understood how great ~~that~~ misery *their*
must be ; but never till now had I any real
conception of what that anguish is, that un-
utterable harrowing of the heart, which such
a separation, as I had then experienced for
the first time, inflicts on hearts that truly
love.

O ! *Oh*, ye thoughtless and extravagant sons
and daughters of fashion, whose inclina-
tions must be gratified at any price, who
cannot see a trinket in a goldsmith's window,
new equipage, or shawl, or mantle of the

covet.

latest mode, but must ~~long for~~ their possession—who, to deck out your persons and pamper every appetite, forestall your incomes, and become the cringing slaves and scorn of every tradesman, ye know not at what a sacrifice ye are purchasing your pleasures; nor will ye know, perhaps, till the dark hour of your own inevitable separation from all you hold dear and precious on earth overtakes you. Till then you will go on buying, buying things that you do not want, and which do not become you if you did a heaping order on order, debt on debt, danger on danger, and all for what?—That you may look well in the world's eyes, for, in spite of every self-delusion, it is impossible you can appear otherwise than what you really are in your own, viz., mere daws and monkeys cutting a dash in borrowed plumes. But dash on you will, and continue to impose on simplicity, till the day of reckoning comes, for come assuredly it will

in some shape at last ; then, denuded and clean plucked, and standing forth naked and forlorn, you will begin to have some clear conception of what fools you have been to barter away peace of mind, independence and liberty, for the sake of looking grand and consequential in the estimation of a world, that never fails to repay the homage of its victims with contempt and scorn !

But to continue my narrative. After a — short walk to the Haute Ville, during which my escort, in consideration to my feelings, I suppose, kept at as respectable a distance as possible—having, I rather think, received a friendly hint from the Commissaire to that effect—I was admitted, for the first time in my life, a prisoner, within the walls of a gaol. A prisoner ! oh, what a term is that when applied to oneself for the first time ! for if ~~it is~~ true that the first is seldom the last entry into a debtor's gaol, repetition

Q doubtless, blunts the sting, and a man may live to glory even in his shame.

Never shall I forget my sensations, when, after reconnoitring us through a narrow wicket in the door, the governor made his appearance in answer to Monsieur Halley's vigorous summons at the knocker, and, doffing his old black cotton velvet cap to the Huissiers, and casting a hasty glance of scrutiny at me, ushered us all, pell mell, into a side room or bureau, where certain official forms had to be gone through before I could be qualified for the honour of becoming one of Monsieur le Gouverneur's tenants. As the ponderous doors were slammed to after me, and locked and bolted, my sensations, I say, in spite of all the stoicism with which I had armed myself, were anything but comfortable. Along one side of the room, immediately under the single window by which it was lighted, and which was heavily barred, stood a high table with desks

and writing materials, at which down sat the Huissiers, pen in hand, to complete the necessary forms for my provisional committal. On the opposite side was another clumsy worm-eaten old table or sideboard, loaded with large brown loaves in readiness for distribution to the poor prisoners who subsisted on the prison diet. Three or four ricketty chairs, a few office books, and a dirty map or two, completed the appointments of this bureau, not to mention a large shaggy sour-faced dog, who from the first moment of our introduction seemed to eye me with peculiar distrust, and who never quitted my side till I was safely installed out of harm's way in my own chamber, and do what I will by feeding or coaxing, I have never been able to make a friend of old Moustch to this day.

For nearly six hours did they keep me, kicking my heels about in this bureau, before the Huissieurs had completed their la-

*, if I would have the goodness
to follow him:*

TOM THORNTON.

103

hours in my behalf, when Monsieur le Gouverneur did me the favour to signify that my room was ready ~~too~~.

Glad enough was I to escape from the hateful presence of Monsieur Halley and Co., and, preceded by the gaoler, or, rather, by Monsieur le Concierge, I wound my way, as well as I could see and feel, up a narrow dark flight of stairs, leading to a passage about three feet wide, out of which opened four chambers, if such they could be called, and, ~~ah~~ my heart! how the cold struck to it, as the Concierge led the way, keys in hand, into the furthest one, prepared for me. I tried to look unconcerned, but the villain must have noticed a slight quivering of the lips as I gave a rapid glance round the room.

“ *Voila!*” exclaimed he, triumphantly; and pointing to my bed, “ *c'est tout à fait propre—n'est ce pas*, Monsieur Thornton?”

“Oui, oui, bien commode,” answered I;
“mais n’avez vous pas une autre chaise?”

“Nous n’avons pas une autre, monsieur.”

“*N’importe,*” said I; though as I had to pay ten francs a month for my lodging, I did think, in the simplicity of my heart, that they might have found me a chair with a back to it.

To do them justice, they had managed a pretty fair bedstead, and, in addition to the universal straw palliasse, had routed out from some old store a decent wool mattress. A blue cotton coverlet thrown over these gave a clean and homely effect to the whole, so that it was no wonder that the Concierge was proud of his work, when he called it *tout à fait propre.* But I was not doomed to lumbago for the rest of my days, for, by the kind solicitude of my wife, assisted by our ever-constant friend, Septimus Sanguine, without whose indefatigable attention and

sympathy I know not what she would have done, soon came bed and bedding, blankets, sheets, counterpane, everything indeed *tout à fait propre*; and I verily believe, from that hour, the Concierge has never loved me.

Well, the first shudder or two over, I began, like a true Englishman, to think how I could make myself most comfortable. It was useless to despair; no doubt, in a few days, either my aunt would restore me to liberty, or Mowbray, knowing the position in which I was placed on his account, would find means to remove that claim against me. Troubles like these might befall us all—it was no use to give way to despondency—I would bear it like a man—they should see they had an Englishman to deal with.

Thus fortified, I took the dimensions of my room, twelve feet by eight; then I felt the walls, which had just been whitewashed; the cold clammy feeling of all around me gave another shudder, but it was clean and

provide for the bill, and the other claims were not of a nature to forbid the hope of an arrangement.

though the floor was of stone, and my feet as cold as the floor, some matting would cover that next day, and it would be exercise to clear out the wet sand with which it was liberally sprinkled ; and then I could have the table placed under the window, and a toilet cloth to cover it ; and then I looked at the window, and another shudder, colder than the last, came over me, as I counted six iron bars, that seemed to say—get out if you can : like an idiot, I stood staring at those bars, and something like a tear trembled in my eyes for a moment, but it was then but for a moment, the approach of the Concierge's step roused me to myself.

“ *Voila !* ” said he, with as near an approach to a smile as he was capable of, and putting down a basket, “ *beaucoup de choses pour vous.* ”

“ *'Merci,* ” said I ; and thankful, in truth, did I feel, for there stood the consolatory assurance, that though absent, I was not for-

gotten, in the shape of a large ~~panier~~, filled with everything that kindness could think of to lighten somewhat the load my heart was bearing.

As I took out each package, every one of them tokens of love and sympathy, and stowed them away on the shelf appointed for their reception, twenty times my heart felt as if it would burst. Could I but have wept outright, it would have soon been over; but my next door neighbour's footsteps close to me made it more than probable that, companions in misfortunes, we must be companions in every sense, and so it proved, in a moment after we met, greeted each other like brother-sufferers ought, and in less than ten minutes had decided that we were both the most ill-used, persecuted, and immaculate victims, that ever entered the *Hotel d'Angleterre*, as that wing of the building was proudly called where we lodged, and that one and all of the Bou-

logne tradesmen were a set of — what I blush now to think we should ever have been irritated by angry feelings to call such highly respectable and conscientious individuals.

Having settled this point to our mutual satisfaction, I returned to my room, determined to be superior to fortune's malice ; but it would not do—my spirit was unsubdued ; but not having tasted food for ten hours, I was faint and weary, so the contents of the basket occurred to me, and taking a pint bottle of sherry, which Blanche had smuggled in somehow with the other things, and some biscuits, into my neighbour's room, we renewed the subject of our hardships over a social glass ; the consequence of which was, that seven o'clock struck, and the Concierge was going his rounds before we had half enumerated our list of grievances.

In a few minutes more his heavy tread

approached our doors. It was time to wish good night—“*Bon soir*, Monsieur Bolter—*Bon soir*, Monsieur Swift—*Bon soir*, Monsieur Colville—*Bon soir*, Monsieur Thornton,” repeated the Concierge, as he saw us, one after the other safe and sound, under lock and key; and, oh! what words can describe my feelings, as I heard the iron bolts drawn across my door, and knew that I was indeed a prisoner.

My heart, full to bursting, could resist no longer—I felt as if I were choking—tears, scalding tears, rolled down my cheeks, there was no one near to see them, so I let them flow such tears as I had never shed before.

Oh, how salutary was the lesson taught me at that moment! Almost stupefied, I stood gazing around me, my eyes rested on the shelf—thoughts of home, and all that made that home so dear, rushed on my mind, a sickening sensation indescribable came over me, as I thought that there I

must remain, locked, and barred, and bolted in, like a felon, for twelve long hours; my temples throbbed and burnt like red hot coals—I was parched with thirst, but not a drop of water had I thought of providing. Perhaps in bed sleep might bring with it forgetfulness—I undressed myself, it was not yet eight—I laid my aching head on my pillow, and again the tears fell fast and burning. — Oh, what a night was that! who shall ever know what I went through that dreadful night? — How impatiently ~~I~~ I ~~count~~ every hour, as it was tolled forth by the *Haute Ville* clocks, with what relief ~~I~~ I at last ~~hear~~ the approaching footsteps of the Concierge, as seven struck; and how ~~did~~ my heart beat, as he drew back the bolts of my door. I seemed to breathe more freely—a sense of suffocation was removed from my breast, as I felt the hinges yield to my touch. But the worst had passed, the first terrible shock had been borne, and as I lis-

I counted

tened to the cheerful sallies of my companions in misfortune in the adjoining chambers, and, like them, prepared for the morning meal, I felt the necessity of acquiring that state of mind which is best calculated to carry a man courageously through whatever trials it may please the Disposer of all events to bring upon him.

February 17.—This has been one of those days, at once of joy and sorrow to the prisoner, permitted by the regulations for the admission of relatives and friends ; two days a week only, and then but an hour each day, being allowed for these happy yet melancholy reunions. Blanche, full of hope, and courage, and consolation. It is not in seasons of prosperity, when the energies of a noble mind may not be called into action, but in times of danger and necessity, that their intrinsic worth is proved. Amiability and firmness of purpose are by no means incompatible in one and the same nature ;

nor are meekness and true courage the strangers to each other, which the cowardly and the vain glorious may suppose. It is not when surrounded by luxuries, when every wish of the heart is gratified, and there is no room for complaint or murmur, but in the hour of want, and danger, and distress, that a man knows the value of a good wife. There is little virtue in that amiability, that apparent meekness and patience, which basks, all smiles and contentment, in the lap of indulgence: trust not to it, it may glide tranquilly and gaily down the stream, as long as skies are fair, and the current runs unruffled; but if the dark clouds come over, and the tempest overtake it, think you it will weather the storm?—I know better.

Nothing like misfortune, too, to test the sincerity of friendships.—“ What can be kinder than the attentions of the Robinsons and the Faulkners?” Blanche says; “ and as

for honest Septimus ^{he} is as good to me as a father."

Mrs. Waddlestern has called on her once, or, rather, made affectionate inquiries at the street door—"Hoping the family were all quite well; and had Mrs. Thornton quite done with the Cookery Book ~~she lent her?~~ and Rebecca's love, and should be so glad of the Storm Gallop which ~~she left~~ her, as ~~she particularly~~ wanted it to ~~lend to~~ a friend. She feels," she tells every one, "more than any one can suppose for us, and is sure ~~she would do anything~~ in her power, if she had it; but, ~~she must~~ say, she always was astonished ^{italics} how Blanche Thornton could afford that violet-coloured velvet bonnet this winter, and she had made *her* leghorn do very well with fresh trimmings and a new pair of strings; and she had often thought, though she said nothing about it, that there was a great deal more extravagance than there need to have been, ^{every time} they gave a little party—

There is nothing she wouldn't do

— as people made their beds, so must they lie."

four wax candles always on the chimney piece, and instead of a few cakes and biscuits, and a glass of *vin ordinaire*, which — was quite sufficient, there must be sandwiches, and sherry at three francs a bottle; but it was no affair of hers—if people would go hand over head, no wonder they came to trouble.

Nothing can be more apparent than that Mrs. Waddlestern *is* perfectly justified in fighting shy of a doubtful cause. The rat, they say, deserts the tottering house; and how can any sensible person be surprised, if his friends get out of his way when he is falling to pieces? He has only to clear away the rubbish, and set vigorously to work to build himself another house on a surer foundation, and store it well, and make it snug and comfortable, and no fear of the rats returning, or the friends either.

The first shock over, and the necessity for action overruling every other thought,

the troubles of the past will be the
best security for the joys of the future,

TOM THORNTON.

115

Blanche is racking her ingenuity, she says, to devise means for our future comfort and independence. "If I will only write a full, true, and particular account of my unhappy position to my aunt," which I have as good as promised her to do, "~~all will be well~~," she declares; "omitting any mention of my marriage for the present, if that is my wish."

Sanguine, in communication with Mowbray, ~~has~~ great hopes that he will be able to remit the money for the bill in the course of a few weeks, ~~deplores~~ his misfortune," he says, "far more on my account than his own, and can never forgive himself, or make me reparation enough, for the trouble and misery he has unintentionally brought on us, ~~has~~ no words to express his surprise and indignation at Plumley's breach of faith, ~~who~~ promised him that the bill should not go out of his possession, and that he would renew it, should it happen that he

having

understanding

116

TOM THORNTON.

required further time. Owes his own arrest, he says, to him and O'Hara, they having made over his acceptances to other parties in London, contrary to the agreements between them. Advises me to beware of Plumley, who, he declares, is a villain in more shapes than one."

privately informed Sanguine, who is indefatigable in my behalf, "convinced that Messrs. Bruin & Co. not would ever have acted as they have done, but from the rumours circulated against me for by some party or parties in the background, whom he is determined to unmask if he can. Has reasons to believe that Plumley for is at the bottom of them; he has a heart, he says, black enough for anything perhaps reckons on making a per-centage for himself out of it under the rose, for he would sell his friend to the devil for a five pound note; or, perhaps, has other schemes hatching which time will bring to light; but he will be beaten yet, though he be a limb of Lucifer.

as George Fleetwood says,

himself.

TOM THORNTON.

117

, you know,

fer ¹ Dante, my dear fellow, gives us ² a tolerable insight into the accommodations of the infernal regions and their ³ population, ⁴ inhabitants, and a motley crew he introduces us to; each class has its appointed quarters ⁵ all are suitably provided for; but there is or ought to be a department specially adapted and put apart, more deep and dark and terrible than all the rest, for such spirits as the Messrs. Plumley. It may possibly take to the end of time to fill it, so spacious is it presumed to be; but that time will come at last ⁶ what are ⁷ a thousand years in the calculations of eternity? ⁸ and by then it is reasonably conceived that Hell will have its revenge. Two of a trade never agree ⁹ nor was it ever known, however the Messrs. Plumley & Co. may go cheerily down life's dance hand in hand with the 'old gentleman,' that ¹⁰ when they came to the bottom, they had cheated the devil."

February 18.—There is something fear-

, you know, Tom,

ful in the thought, that a man may be momentarily torn from his home and family, if he be a foreigner, and thrust, like a convict, into a French or Belgian gaol, for the trifling sum of a hundred and fifty francs, or six pounds English. In Belgium, indeed, for a much less sum. In France, if he have incurred a debt to that amount, he is liable to instant arrest, and, if unable to pay it and the costs, generally half as much as the debt, there is no help for him—he must go to prison, and once there, unless he have the means to procure supplies from without, or friends to furnish them, there he may lie and pine and rot, till time or payment release him ; unless, like a former wretched occupant of the next chamber to this, he prefer trying the strength of the clothes peg on his door, and is found hanging thereon some morning, when his gaoler comes to unbolt and unbar, and wish him *bon jour*. I often cast a look of horror on that peg,

and think how it has borne through a whole fearful night, the stiffened corpse of a fellow countryman. Poor St. John, a little while before his liberation from all earthly prisons, he traced a line or two in pencil outside the passage window frame, within a few yards of his room door ; they make my blood run cold whenever I look at them, and yet, for the life of me, if I pass the window ten times a day, I cannot help stopping to repeat them ; they run thus—

“ St. John entered the Hotel d’Angleterre, Jan. 18, 1842 ; shall wish old —— good by very soon.”

Last resources are terrible things. “ There is something very formidable,” says an able writer, “ in their slightest symptoms of failure ; bringing all to one die, they exclude numberless subordinate and casual assistances, the whole chapter of accidents, the operation of unseen causes, lower motives, and the infinite generation of small affairs ;

then, as nature does not work in this way, but with a most wonderful variety and graduation of means and ways, a last resource is generally something rotten and inherently artificial ; it is commonly matter instead of mind ; it is something which does not grow, strengthen, indurate and adapt itself to the occasion ; but is a dead weight which kills the living influences in its neighbourhood."

No doubt St. John had exhausted all resources ; his was a hideous prospect, hopeless, irremediable ; there was his last and only home on earth, and what a home ! They who in the first moments of misfortune had, perhaps, flocked round him with sympathy and assistance, had grown cold and careless, and were dropping fast away ; long nourished habits of intemperance, clinging to their victim as long as the power to indulge them lasted, were not relinquished without a struggle. One effort more to loosen the bonds that bound him, but in vain ; friends

had grown callous and creditors more clamorous by delay. "I will triumph, still," thought St. John, and the spirit of all evil was at his side to approve the fatal threat.

"Thou canst and thou shalt triumph," it whispered.

That fearful night was indeed a triumphant one; alas! not for the wretched suicide, but for the dark demon that presided at his downfall.

And did the next day behold a tear of commiseration fall from any eye? Oh, no! gaolers never weep, and governors are beyond the weakness of surprise. " 'Twas only an Englishman!" In *la belle France* life is held of but small account even for its own children—the death of an Englishman would scarcely merit a Frenchman's passing notice, unless it so happened that he had a five franc piece interest in his salvation.

We none of us know our strength till we are tried, nor our powers of ~~fortitude and~~

~~affailed;~~ resistance till ~~temptations assail us~~; many can preach of fortitude and resignation who would be the first to yield if attacked; still let the most miserable be assured, whatever may be their necessities, however persecuted, *that* ~~the~~ *dark spirit* ~~is~~ always at the elbow of the wretched, is the last aid they should call to their assistance. If they require an *avocat*, Monsieur Marteau will do all that can be done for them, be their case as hopeless even as poor St. John's; and though his bill of costs be no pleasant consequence of their preference, still, when settled, there is an end to it, whereas their reckoning with the devil is never satisfied. So, let them stick to Marteau, in the hope that by some happy chance he may get them out of the fire, whereas, there can be little doubt, the devil would only get them deeper into it.

A prison is a terrible place, view it in whatever light one will, and those who deem

an eligible

it a salutary sanctuary against crime, or ~~a~~ school for improvement, regard it only from the outside; and even if they have ~~ever~~ taken the trouble to make themselves acquainted with its internal machinery, have been at little pains, perhaps, to develop its effects and tendencies beyond the evidences of its internal discipline; they have not studied the prisoner's mind as well as his person; the tenor and direction of his thoughts, as well as his outward demeanour; they have contented themselves with observing his humbled bearing, his ready obedience to the prison rules, his apparent contrition, his cleanly aspect, his freedom from physical complaints, and, may be, his look and language of awakened piety; but they have not examined beyond the surface—marked the disease of the mind, much less troubled themselves to follow him, at liberty, to his home. “Good bye, Alphonse, till we see *probably*,

you again," is the customary leave-taking among them when they quit the gaol—"good bye, old chap, till we see you again;" and safe are they, if they remain there long enough, to see Alphonse some day back again.

Alas ! and why is it that there should be such an invincible tendency in the heart once vitiated to return to its idols ? ~~Why — we~~ is it that the prison doors will again be thrown open to admit Alphonse ? One would think that the horrors of the scene he has just quitted would be sufficient warning. Whither bent he his footsteps when he first left these walls a free man again ?—to his home, his parents, or his brothers and sisters, or his kinsfolk ? Oh, no ! from them he was an outcast, and ~~penniless~~ and ~~home-~~ less, where was he to find companionship ? —alas ! where ~~the outcast~~ and ~~penniless~~ ~~the~~ alone may look for it—in the haunts of outcasts like himself.

0 Oh, ye infallible legislators, ye rigid disciplinarians, ye governors, ye chaplains, ye inspectors, ye philanthropists and gaol reformers! ye may make laws, ye may enforce them; ye may visit the culprit's cell, preach to him, restrain, exhort, compel him to reformation and amendment; but all will be in vain, if, when the term of his condemnation is at an end, he is turned out into a pitiless world, with no better security against a relapse into crime than a memory full of precepts and a pair of new shoes. Hunger must be fed, the body clothed, employment must be found, a character, as Sir Harold argued with the poacher, must be established, or the outcast must again find food and shelter in a gaol. It must inevitably be so till the laws or the good sense of society have regard rather to the prevention of crime, than its punishment. Let not the real philanthropist be satisfied with merely visiting and endeavouring to reform the pri-

than the punishment of crime

soners in confinement: let him follow them when liberated, to their homes, and assist in their restoration to society and the good opinion of their fellow men; let ~~them~~ not abandon the good work till the outcasts are established in some way of getting an honest living; "let ~~them~~," as Sir Harold said, "feel a pride in their own exertions, and they will soon appreciate their value;" the rubicon will have been passed, they will no longer look on themselves as outcasts; and although there will be always some, so steeped in sin and irredeemably vicious, that nothing can profit them, the majority—and that is sufficient for the purpose—would become respectable and useful members of society.

As it is at present, Alphonse will continue his periodical migrations from the gaol to his boon companions and associates, and from them back again to gaol, till a worse fate overtake him, and justice, as they call it, is vindicated.

If a poor fellow in durance vile has a turn for philosophy, no place can afford him better opportunities, rightly used, for its exercise. What the fruits may be is another matter. Amidst the din and whirl and distractions of the world, a man may have little leisure for reflection; but he must be strangely obtuse, or indifferent, if he cannot or will not cogitate in prison; and then, as I said before, if he have any talent for philosophy, he will not fail to discover abundant materials whereon to build the most promising hypotheses of reformation—reformation in his circumstances—his expenditure—his habits of life—his temper—his little favourite indulgences, and many other subordinate matters, that no one knows of but himself, and which have been thorns in his side, more or less, ever since he cut his wise tooth.

In a gaol, a man who sees at all, ought

to look things fairly in the face. Some poor wretches never raise their eyes from the earth, what the nature of their reflections may be, if indeed they reflect at all, it is impossible to divine. Some gaze at you with a fixed and vacant stare of idiocy, half smiling, half crying, as if their minds were without a ray of light, happy for them perhaps that even the consciousness of their own hopelessness is denied them. Some have an anxious, restless glance, and an uneven step, who keep muttering between their teeth, and shaking their fists in air, alas! the doctrines of philosophy have nothing to do with their dark catalogue of wrongs. Others wander up and down like caged wild beasts of sullen and ferocious aspects, regarding all societies and their laws as instruments only of injustice and oppression, what their broodings may be, the gibbet or the galleys will ere long disclose. Others, and they are the greatest villains of

them all carry so meek and innocent a front, evince a spirit so patient, so humble, so resigned, that the unpractised eye is filled with pity and commiseration, and justice too often robbed of its fittest prey. What may be the calculations of yonder cunning, close-cropped knave, with his *livre de prière* on his knees, expounding scripture texts, while the chaplain goes his rounds, it is not for me to proclaim. Doubtless he has found his philosophy answer before, and no doubt will again.

February 19.—I was saying yesterday, that a man who sees at all, ought, in a prison, to look things fairly in the face. One would think that the romance of life was over with him there—that in the teeth of bolts and bars, and dungeons, and dark cells, there could be no delusion. No such thing! Although shut out from companionship with the world, all his old associations pursue him into his retirement, and he casts about him

and contemplates, and perhaps resolves at first on fifty schemes of improvement and atonement; but the ruling principle is strong; and if he don't get out too soon, the chances are he will return to society pretty much the same, if no worse, as he went in; if not, *a* it is the turn of ~~the~~ die, or, rather, the most difficult thing in the world to foretell, whether he will turn out a special hypocrite, or a decided ornament to society; but to be enabled to form any thing like a correct guess as to what a poor fellow, within a prison's walls, will prove, you must not wait till he gets out—you must see and observe him in ~~in~~ there he is not outshone; like his copartners in trouble, he is the victim of chances—a child of misfortune—a martyr ever. There is something so confident and self-assuring in the look and carriage of a persecuted victim—a look about him which it seems to be the peculiar privilege of prisons to bestow; it is not acquired, I assure

you, in a fortnight. To regard a well-meaning personage, for the first month, taking the air in the court-yard, you would suppose, if you had a grain of charity in you, he was the very last man in the world fitted for durance vile; only observe his boots, they are polished every morning, just as if he were going for a stroll up the *Grande Rue*, and his neckcloth arranged *tout à fait comme il faut*, while the bear's-grease pot has evidently been called into requisition to add lustre to those charming curls.

The chances are, if you enquired, that Mr. Bolter has not the slightest doubt in the world, but that he shall be honourably released from "quod" in less than eight-and-forty-hours; the firmness of his step—the jauntiness of his air—the perfect *non-chalance* with which he puffs his cigar, and the harmonious smiles he is bestowing on all around him prove it. Mark him in less than a month's time from that happy mo-

—, how faultlessly,

ment of delusion, the polish will have faded from his boots—a loose dirty-spotted cotton cravat will supply the place of the neat opera tie, and those glossy curls, once the pride of his heart, will hang matted and uncared for beneath his unbrushed hat—the sad but too-sure evidence that directly a man begins to feel at home in a gaol, he has turned philosopher in spite of himself. But hark ! the clock of St. Nicholas is tolling midnight, a time when every member of a well-regulated establishment should be at rest ; so I will turn into my bed, and dream, if I can, that I am safe and snug at home with my angel by my side—out of debt, out of danger, with plenty of five franc pieces in my pocket, wherewithal to defy all the *Huissiers* on this side of the channel.

There is comfort and solace in bed, even to the wretched inmate of a gaol, and though thought, busy restless thought, drive sleep from his pillow—though that pillow

may be soaked with scalding tears, and the night wear dismally away, still ¹ there is solace in his couch, however hard, however sleepless. There, thoughts of home and all that makes home so dear, of family and friends, and happier days for ever gone, crowd upon the memory, and, though the recollection bring with it the sting of self-reproach and condemnation, yet the retrospect is sweet; for ² although the joys of the past can never again return, there is a sort of balm in the reflection that there were friends who once loved us, scenes that once witnessed our happiness, and somehow, in spite of every misgiving, a hope will always remain, that, however dark and threatening ³ is the present, the future, under a merciful Providence, will not be wholly profitless. So, having trimmed my lamp, and committed myself and all my burthens to the care and consideration of Him, at whose hands, although a debtor to an amount incalcula-

ble, I know there is ever justice and mercy, I turn into my bed, and, placing Aunt Lucy's 'best gift' under my pillow, try hard to fall asleep and dream of home and liberty.

February 21.—The credulity of some people is on a par with their simplicity. I ought to have known better, but the hand of the drowning man catches at every straw. I was told that my principal detaining creditor desired only what was fair; "would I make some proposal? he was open to an arrangement." Nothing would please me better, nothing more in harmony with my own wishes; so I believed him, and dispatched a letter to the great grocer by Blanche, full of arguments and assurances ~~that~~ would have satisfied Shylock himself. "That man, Blanche, has a chest large enough," said I, "to hold a full-sized heart—if anything can touch it home this must."

How the mind feels lightened after one has fairly sent off a letter which confidence

has dictated and hope expects every thing from, and it is not, perhaps, till within an hour or so of the moment that is to confirm or destroy our anticipation, that the possibility of disappointment has occurred to us. Then one gets fidgetty, and no wonder, and so did I extremely so this morning, till a nasty, vulgar, pinched, unpromising-looking note found its way to me at breakfast. I saw by the cut of it that it was a blank ; and so it proved to be, ~~the~~ the great grocer with the capacious chest has not a heart, it is evident, bigger than a nutmeg, and not half as soft. "Security, security ?" then will he throw open my prison door, and be as malleable as putty ; then may I take my hat, pack up my moveables, and to my Concierge bid farewell for ever, and, if not in too great a hurry, may look in on my way home at his counting house, and receive his *parfaite consideration.*

But, unfortunately, I cannot comply with the conditions required, so, there is no help for it, like Sterne's starling, "I can't get out;" and where would be the wisdom in beating my poor breast for nothing against the bars of my cage! I could not get out, and my impotent struggles would only increase the severity of my captivity.

My angel Blanche, whose sweet smiles and gentle tones would find their way to any but a heart of stone, in the excess of her affection and solicitude for me, undertook the hopeless task of convincing a bear of his brutality, in spite of all my remonstrances she would go and confront Sir Bruin in his lair.

There is nothing like working yourself into a rage if you have a bad cause.

"Madame, you will have the goodness to bear in mind that it was not I who arrested your husband."

"True, you did not strike the first blow," replied my wife, thrown for a moment off her guard, "but you were one of the first, I think, to fall on him when down."

"It is my duty, Madame, to take care of myself."

"True, and if you would really consult your own interest, you will treat my husband like an honourable man."

"Pardon—I have no doubt of Monsieur's honour, but prefer a guarantee."

"It is impossible Monsieur can give you a safer guarantee than his word as a gentleman, or his promissory note," insisted Blanche.

"Then Monsieur must remain where he is," insisted the great grocer.

"But," ~~reminded~~ Blanche, "the other creditors will consent to an arrangement."

"The other creditors ~~are of course at~~ ~~can~~ liberty to please themselves—I am not to

expostulated

be dictated to by them, or Madame either."

"Is it justice to them," persisted Blanche, "to refuse a just and equitable offer?"

"Justice or not justice, I will not be dictated to—Madame, I must have the money or security—I will not be dictated to—Madame, you have *beaucoup de font*—allez, *allez!*" With tears in her eyes did she deign to supplicate the savage; she might as well have talked to one of his Dutch cheeses.

"*N'importe!*" said I, when she told me about it to-day; "have patience, and he shall have payment in full, or my name is not Tom Thornton."

February 22.—Bear up against it as one will, this life in prison is a grave matter; but an involuntary smile, the task a little bitter, passes across my face when as seven o'clock strikes, the Concierge draws the massive bolts and locks, and bars me in as if

I were a felon. And then I look around me, and I say, I cannot help a bitter smile passing over my features at so much caution to secure so harmless an animal. And then comes the question, what have I done to merit all this vigilance? Ten days ago I was living unsuspiciously, and I believed unsuspected, in the enjoyment of perfect security in this fair town, as little conscious of having injured any living soul but myself as Pope Innocent himself. The little *me-moire* at the mercer's stood, as I supposed, arranged for speedy settlement, although our offer of the half *instanter*, and the remainder in a few weeks had not been accepted.

It does, I own, seem rather pitiful for the son of Sir Maltby Thornton, and nephew of the wealthy Sir Harold Thornton, of Rookwood, to make such a pother about a paltry bill of six pounds odd; but greater men, on this side of the water, than Tom Thornton,

have condescended, as remittance-day drew near, to lay themselves under temporary obligation to a pressing tradesman for even six francs. Gentlemen with a clear income of five thousand a-year, or even five hundred, can have no possible conception of the many humiliations attendant on the state denominated "hard up." Certain things that a man ^{with} his remittances, just received, would shudder almost to contemplate as possible, become then inevitable; sundry little shifts and dodges, that pride chokes at the bare thought of in affluence, become, with the change for the last five-franc piece, as unavoidable and importunate as hunger and thirst. Ask young Lollat-ease, or Fred. Jewel, how they would like to part with those splendid trinkets on which they set such store, if only for a little time? ^{they} cannot conceive any thing so shocking to be possible, ^{death} would be preferable—a thousand deaths rather than

suffer such humiliation ; and yet, who knows but that before twelve months their "uncle" will be their constant friend. It is very difficult indeed for a person in the receipt of even no more than five hundred a-year clear, to realize the idea of being what is emphatically termed "hard up."

If rents are overdue, or dividends forestalled, still there are means within reach—title-deeds, accommodation-bills, private-sales—and, these failing, the plate-chest and the jewel-casket. Envious mortals, in possession of all or any of these resources, in case of need, can hardly be expected to appreciate the full signification of the state, "hard up." It is only when none of these are any longer available, that its comprehensive meaning is made apparent ; little matters then become no longer insignificant, even an old pair of left-off shoes, and a discarded hat, have their value, while all that can be turned to account is prized in proportion to

-although 'the coming shadows
do cast their shades plainly enough
before' -

its power of productiveness: but even this power must at last, by constant exercise, be exhausted; and then, and not till then, will Mr. Lollatease, or Mr. Frederick Jewel, comprehend the full import of the state "hard up."

February 23.—There is no situation, rightly viewed, without its privileges and immunities—so it is even with a prison; the furious crowd without may storm and threaten, but the poor fellow under lock and key is deaf to its clamour; he is in perfectly safe keeping, and, if his mind be not too sensitively strung, and his purse will allow, he may even pick up flesh, nay, get fat, before he surprises his friends with his reappearance in public.

When I first became the tenant of this chamber, I thought it the most wretched lodging I had ever beheld; but habit reconciles us wonderfully to circumstances, that we contemplated at first sight, perhaps, with

of our respectable selves — staring
at each other, face to face,
most companionably and
sympathizingly: —

TOM THORNTON.

143

horror. My room, though iron guarded
and stone floored, is by no means so terrible
as it seemed to me the first night I entered
it. True, many little comforts have been
added to it by the never-tiring thoughtfulness
of my wife ; and, what with one addi-
tion or another, it almost begins to assume
an aspect of costliness. To cheat ourselves
into the belief that the iron bars to the
window have disappeared, Blanche has
tacked up two muslin curtains ; then, by the
bedside, there is a piece of carpet, and a
hassock under the table for my feet. To
somewhat relieve the monotony of the white-
washed wall, she has ~~likewise~~ pinned up
two elegant jet-black profile portraits ; these,
here and there set off by some exquisite
gems from her own inimitable pencil, are to
me finer sights than all the contents of the
Louvre and National Gallery put together.
A hand glass, just large enough to see my
face in, stands on two nails driven into the

of our respectable selves — staring
at each other, face to face,
most companionably and
sympathizingly: —

✓ wall, and having the advantage of a pretty good light, is all a moderate-minded man need desire; so, what with reading and scribbling, eating, drinking, clearing away, mopping, and sweeping, and dusting, and listening and observing, I assure you, my dear aunt—for whose inspection this part of my journal is especially intended—that the time, however dreary, passes anything but unprofitably.

I have just made a great acquisition to my comforts by the hire of a small table and chair from my neighbour Bolter—of whom more anon—at ten sous a-week, paid, by agreement first made and stipulated, in advance. ⁸ this is an invariable rule in all matters of bargain and barter, between the occupants of “the Hotel;” so that now there can be no cause of uneasiness, for with a regular washstand and a decent chair or two, I need not blush when I am honoured with visitors.

To how many admirable uses may the members and faculties be applied, if people did but know, and would prove their capabilities. It was all very natural for a young Queen once to ask, when the dearness of bread was being deplored in her presence, why the people did not eat pastry ; probably she was as little aware of the uses to which the staff of life was applied, as she was of the value of her precious little hands and feet : but few of us are so royally privileged as she was, and in the present “ go-a-head” times, it behoves everybody, high and low, rich and poor, to have some clear and practical notions of the real capabilities, properly exercised, of their members, even should occasion require—and who can tell when it may—to the knowledge of how to make a bed, or cook a mutton chop. No man deserves to sleep sound, or fare better than a Rookwood-union pauper, if he could

not at a pinch make his own bed, or cook his own cutlet.

Now, there is Miss Juliana Lollatease, sister of Lady Lollatease, living in one of the great houses in Portland Place, whose maid never calls her till eleven, and who invariably breakfasts in bed, condescending to get up, or, rather, to be got up by one, in time for a hot luncheon; then condescending to be dressed for a carriage airing at four, and permitting herself to walk, as she cannot well be carried, from the drawing-room to her landau and home again at six—*la même chose tous les jours*;—do you think she knows the use of her legs, except it may be to carry her through a valtz or polka with young Lieutenant Jephson Jewel? And there is Lieutenant Jephson Jewel himself—do you suppose that he has the slightest idea that those two lanky members of his, of which he is so tender, could, but for those elegant tight patent leather boots,

actually convey his sacred person at the rate of four miles an hour from the 'Junior United' to Ball's Pond and back again? No such thing, he has not the remotest conception of his own powers, he is the victim of high heels and patent polish; and when, like his charming fair friend Juliana, he condescends to be seen on the pavement, the effort is evidently a painful one. How would either of them look, if they were told that they should some day have to black their own shoes, and go on their errands own?

Nobody could know less of the art and mystery of charing than did Tom Thornton, till the fact presented itself, that, unless he learnt how to arrange his own bed, he must e'en lie in it unmade, and until he could stomach his pride enough to fill his own pitcher, he must go unwashed. Such facts, staring a man in the face, are irresistible inducements for him to put out his strength, which, as Blanche truly says, 'he knows no-

thing about till he tries it.' ~~He~~ He then becomes gradually aware that hands were given him for more purposes than to wear rings upon, and that his feet, too, may be better employed than in hopping in the polka, and doing penance in patent polish.

I used to think my scout at Magdalen the king of bed-makers ~~but~~ but I could beat him hollow at it now; no housemaid in England could set things to rights better than can Tom Thornton. ~~I~~ I had not the remotest conception of what was in me. Many a fine young gentleman and young lady could tell you a tale, I suspect, to the same effect at Canvas Town, who, till circumstances compelled, never did a stroke of work in their lives. Necessity is a hard task-master, but he has elicited many more wholesome truths and taught more useful lessons than all the other schoolmasters and mistresses put together. And this brings me to give you, my dear aunt—who

I know will read these passages of my Journal with peculiar interest, should it ever fall into your hands—an account of how I pass my time. You were always a stickler for order and neatness; and well I remember when I used, as a boy, to pass my vacations at the Hall, how many lectures I got deservedly for my untidiness, and how you promised to give me the handsomest pony in all Devon if I never once forgot to shut the door of your room after me, or was seen with my shoes untied for three weeks. I lost my pony, you know, the last day but one, as you would have it that I left the door ajar, though I persisted it was Annette, by which you got a return of your old enemy the lumbago, as usual.

What would you say if you could see your nephew now, a pattern of order and regularity? Well then—about eight o'clock I get up, turn up my bed, throw an old sheet over it, tie up my head in a handker-

chief—for I am proud of my hair—take up the carpet, give it a good shaking in the passage, sprinkle the floor, and set too to broom out the dust in good earnest; this accomplished, and the little elegances restored to their places, I commence my ablutions, taking great pains with my toilet, that, should any lucky chance set me at liberty before night, I may be in fit trim to meet my friends. If I were to be a prisoner for twenty years I should never be a sloven, for that looks like stopping, and half the battle is to encourage the belief that one is going.

Having put the best face on everything, and set all straight for the day, it wants but half-an-hour to ten o'clock, the regulation breakfast time. What with matutinal greetings and gossipings with my fellow martyrs, borrowing and returning each other's brooms and dusters, laying out the tables for the morning meal, and making

our rooms fit for the reception of company, ten strikes at last, and then comes ~~the~~ the *paniers* with the rolls and coffee, and, what is far better, the joyful moment that opens the doors for the admission of our friends. Until within the last few days, two days a week only were permitted for the English debtors to see their friends; but by an order issued ^{in consequence of our humble petition} to the Sous Prefet, they are now admitted for two hours daily, Sundays excepted; but this indulgence is strictly confined to parents, wife and children, and any other male persons we choose. As the clock strikes twelve all must depart, and, unless by special order, no one is allowed after then to see a prisoner, under any pretext whatever, except the doctor and avocat—they may come at all times of the day.

Sadly is some reformation required in their gaol regulations, especially as regards debtors. Little distinction is made between

them and criminals of the worst cast. A low wall only divides the court-yards in which they take their exercise, the same hours are appointed for their meals, and for locking up and letting out. A debtor, whatever his rank or condition may be, is treated in almost all respects, as far as the regulations go, like the convicts ; the only material difference being, that the debtor can see ~~his~~ friends in his own room daily, the others in the hall only under observation of the governor. Any other privileges the debtor may boast of are solely at his own proper cost and expense ; if he can command good breakfasts and dinners, they may come at the appointed times, and he may look down from his window into the yard beneath, and bless his stars that his fate, however hard to bear, is enviable in comparison with that of the miserable wretches there pacing up and down in squalid poverty and filth. But if he can-

squalid

not obtain his supplies from without, gaol allowance is his only resource against starvation ; it matters not who or what he is ~~if~~ he can afford no better dinner, and have no kind friends to provide for him, he must e'en make shift to eat prison porridge or starve.

Nor can he take his share even of this porridge without paying for it. By the French and Belgian laws a monthly sum of about twenty-five francs, paid always in advance, must be deposited with the Governor by the creditor or creditors for the debtor's board and lodging, while he remains in prison. Ten francs of this go to the Governor for rent of room furnished with bedstead and bedding, table and two chairs ; the ~~rest~~ ^{remainder} ~~is~~ ^{it is} for his food, provided he takes the prison diet ; if not, ~~they are~~ handed over to him every month ; but eventually he, the debtor, will have to refund whatever his creditors have ~~paid~~ for him, before he quits the gaol.

This law, universally enforced, is so far humane that the debtor shall not starve by his incarceration, and the knowledge of having to maintain him in prison may serve as a salutary check to the rapacity and vindictiveness of many a creditor, for it sometimes happens that the utterly insolvent condition of the debtor precludes the possibility of his ever repaying these monthly charges for his support, and, being found not worth powder and shot, he gets his discharge.

I never receive my daily *paniers* stocked, thank Heaven! with everything needful, but I look down on the unhappy creatures in the court below, and, comparing my actual with my possible state, acknowledge with a grateful heart how much more I have to be thankful for, than to murmur at. Yes, I do feel, that, come to the merit of the ~~two~~ cases, probably I have no more right to the full *panier* than those poor things, and it

creatures;

would be as well for us all when induced to arrogate to ourselves any superiority, to consider whether, had we been necessitated and tempted as many of our less fortunate fellow-creatures have been, we might not have fallen as low, and perhaps without even their excuse.

But you may say, my dear aunt, that with a basket of good things at my elbow, all this moralizing sounds very like cant.

All I mean to say is, without setting up for a teacher, that imprisonment is bad enough to a man whose purse can command the respect of his gaoler, and keep some flesh on his bones; how deplorable must it be to the poor wretch, who has neither friend within nor friend without, and who, nevertheless, is expected to shew a clean tongue to his doctor when he goes his rounds, to see that regular living and no work are not endangering the digestions of his patients.

But all this has led me from the subject,

my dear aunt, of how I pass my time. Let me see, where was I?—Ah, ten o'clock had just struck, and breakfast and Blanche made their appearance. Talk of knowing the value of time—let a man have but two hours, wherein to hear and tell all that is most imminently depending for his interests and happiness to take counsel for his present necessities, and the provisions for the future—let him have but two short hours, in the which must be said and settled all that is nearest and dearest to his heart, ~~with the wife of his bosom~~, and indispensable to their mutual welfare—then will moments seem more precious to him than years have ever been before.

“ Ah, there is twelve striking, I declare!” Blanche used to exclaim; “ and I have not said one half I had to tell you.”

It was the same every day ~~but~~ twelve B has struck, and there are twenty-two long hours to be passed, before the happy hour

A

~~with the wife of his bosom~~—

for Blanche's reappearance will return ~~but~~ inasmuch as these twenty-two hours must be passed, it is as well to make them as short and endurable as possible ; therefore to reading and writing till two—then an hour's quick march in the court yard, and most essential it is that it should be quick, for as the court is but fifteen paces long, the only chance of circulating the blood and creating an appetite for dinner, is to set to work, up and down, for an hour, at the rate of at least five miles, thus giving oneself a breathing, one may reckon on getting over about four miles before three o'clock, and then comes the call to dinner.

Now, gentlemen in the habit of sitting down to their three courses and dessert every day of the week, with Joseph behind their chairs, to see that they don't starve themselves, think they do it in good style ; and so they do ; but they have no conception of the dignity with which an aristocra-

tic brother, though under a cloud, lays out his luxurious repast. He has been accustomed to do the thing elegantly all his life, and no one but an eye witness would believe how scrupulous he is that every thing, as far as it goes, should put him in mind that he cannot do it as elegantly as he used: but the ruling passion is strong; and, though a bit of paper contain his salt, and his pepper figure in a broken egg cup, still, salt and pepper are not wanting; and it is more than doubtful, if a friend sent him a plate of venison, whether he would pay him the compliment to eat it, unless accompanied by a pot of currant jelly, and served on a hot plate.

Do you suppose, my dear Soyer, that he who has been for five years a member of a crack west end club, that boasts of the best *chef* in England, can forget what is due to your memory, and your invaluable precepts —never to be surpassed? No such thing!

If creditors think by throwing a proud stomach into prison to teach it a lesson of abstemiousness, they do not understand the principle of reminiscences, and, probably, have not taken into consideration, that, as debtors ever were, and will be persecuted victims and martyrs, their only chance of indemnification for the injuries done them is to spite their enemies, by taking the utmost possible care they can of themselves. In France they seem to understand this very well, where they think it hardly worth while to go to the expense of proceedings against a poor man. Let your creditor, either in France or Belgium, know that you are likely to be in a condition to pay him some day or other, no matter when, and rest assured he will not want for patience and perseverance, and ~~not~~ to be blamed, either; on the contrary, if you be a pauper, although the biggest swindler that ever breathed, he will not deem you worth pow-

hardly

der and shot—you may escape; be proved an honest man, and able and willing to pay, and beware how you get credit for a hundred and fifty francs.

February 24.—To a poor fellow in a debtor's prison, the subject of dinner, of which we were speaking last, is, under any circumstances, very important; for, being half doubtful how far he is entitled—if every man had his own—to any dinner at all, he may be pardoned for being a little elaborate in its preparation, and making the most of it. To be indifferent to, to badly serve, or to hurry one's dinner over, is everywhere condemned by orthodox authorities; nor is it so much in the number or quality of the dishes that the art of dining like a gentleman consists, as in that professor-like knowledge of arrangement and adaptation, which, presiding over a single course, makes it a feast fit for kings. Walker, that prince of caterers, don't lay down

any precise rules that I am aware of, for prison feeds ; nor did he, probably, ever conceive it necessary to warn poor debtors against the dangers of over indulgence ; but one of his golden rules is, " Not to hurry at dinner ; " it mars everything, and plays the deuce with the digestion. And again he insists on the necessity of having all the little auxiliaries in their proper places, and within reach—there must be no flurry, no delay, no disappointment ; everything is in proceeding calmly and with a steady determination ~~he says~~ to render dinner second to no enjoyment under the sun. Without going this length, I must allow that a poor fellow in possession of the wherewithal to turn up his nose at prison porridge, may be excused for regarding with complacency the contents of a well-filled basket, and Walker himself might rejoice to see him sit down with an air and grace that would do credit to a Sefton. Really, to

observe my friend Colville and myself lugger our baskets up stairs at three o'clock, stuffed with all the delicacies of the season, would make an alderman's mouth water. It seems a trial of strength with us in two ways—first, which shall make the handsomer display ~~next~~ next, which shall conduct it with greater taste and judgment to its close. My friend's *chef* is a first rate hand at fish ~~so~~, I have him with a *fricassée de veau*, which Blanche, by the aid of Mrs. Waddlestern's cookery book, has earned imperishable laurels for.

“Put in a savory *pâté de gribier*,” whispers my friend to his *chef*, “dash my wig! if I won’t astonish him;” so, in came next day ~~from mine~~ an omlet ~~which~~ Soyer might have envied. “I’ll have him yet,” chuckles my friend, and a *dindon à la tortue* set all further competition at defiance. From that hour, although I have somewhat yielded the

palm, there has been a pretty even race between us, and, though in the end my friend may be the winner, so pure is our blood and pedigree, that I am determined it shall be only by a neck. At present, being pretty fairly matched, we cannot do better than canter on pleasantly together ; this we do, and it would be a subject for a great painter to see us after dinner, enjoying our *otium cum dignitate* over a glass of St. Emelion and a mild W. It is not that there is anything at all extraordinary in a bottle of claret, ~~when~~ claret goes for nothing, and an Havana cigar, but all depends on the way in which things are done. The same thing attempted by two ordinary individuals would merit no mention in this place ; but a sublimer study, as I said before, than my friend Colville and I represent on these convivial occasions, it would be difficult to conceive. Colville suggests that I could not do better than have it neatly etched, for a frontis-

I shall think of it

can't
—/
piece to this work; ~~perhaps I may,~~ if I
~~cannot~~ get a correct likeness of Huissier
Halley, full length, with his silver-headed
Malacca cane, which I should infinitely
prefer.

As we sat chatting together to-day after
dinner, and comparing notes, and bewailing
the follies that had robbed society of two
such ornaments—"It drives me nearly
mad," said Colville, "to think what a pre-
cious fool I have been almost ever since I
went out of jackets, and began to shave hard
for a beard. I had set my heart on being a
soldier; of all lives I thought it the most
charming. Not a shop window that displayed
a shako or silk sash, but I stopped to gaze at
with delight; what with looking and ~~loung-~~ *long-*
~~ing~~ and talking and trying on, I must have
been a marked youth among the regimental
clothiers of London, although my commis-
sion was never likely to appear in the ga-
zette. And yet, these were happy dreams; —/
—/
—/

and strutting and swaggering
and lounging and love making
in uniform. TOM THORNTON. 165

H I saw only the bright side ^{of} my heart was
set on wearing a red coat and a sword at my
side. Had the dress been a black coat ~~and~~
waistcoat and trousers, I don't think I ~~and a~~ ^{white choker}
should have cared a pin for being an officer.

But it was not to be. My father intended me
for the bar—that was the wish of *his* heart,
and no doubt a far better wish than mine.

So, to a special pleader I went, and in due
course, after having consumed the *quantum*
suf. of commons, was 'called' with every
prospect, if I minded my hits, of sitting
some day on the bench at least, if not the
woolsack—so they told me. But I ~~did not~~ ^{didn't}
go the right way, I suppose, to work.

Swords and epaulets still had a charm for
me, and, having good expectations, as I
~~could not~~ be a soldier, I was determined to
be the next best thing in my estimation, a
country squire. Persons of my turn of
mind are very apt to ^{fall into} extremes.
No doubt, my dear fellow, my governor was

couldn't
take rather ambitious views and to

right when he used to say ~~that~~, "the greatest blessing to a young fellow entering life, ~~was~~ to have a right conception of what is ~~the~~ best for him, and, once adopted, never to swerve from the ~~direct~~ line, but to go steadily on, and it ~~would~~ bring him all right at last. "He will then see things in their true light Harry," ~~he used to tell me,~~ and appreciate them ~~according to their real merits~~ and no further; he will not be extravagantly elated by success, nor hopelessly cast down by disappointment; he will pursue the even tenor of his way, my boy, undisturbed and unaffected by those casualties and vexations which impede and oppress the romantic and enthusiastic at every turn. If his career be not so full of lights and shadows, it will be less subject to sudden and overwhelming changes; while the man of sentiment, Harry, is for ever being tossed on the never-resting seas of uncertainty and anxiety, his will be a life of comparative

at their fair worth and for what they will fetch,

and he has only to have his bark
weather-worthy—enough ballast,
and a good rudder, and no fear,
Harry of his bringing her safe and
sound into a safe haven".¹⁶⁷

TOM THORNTON

safety and serenity. The governor was perfectly right—that I can see now. Few young fellows have had better opportunities to succeed in life than myself. I began it without a care for the future—there was the danger, there the rock on which I split. Had I started without a guinea, or the hope of getting one except by my wits, I should at this moment probably have been, if not on the high road to the bench or woolsack, a respectable member of society; but the consciousness that I need not labour unless I pleased, soon made labour a contemplation impossible to be indulged; what indolence suggested as unnecessary, pride, of course, confirmed as *infra*; ease and extravagance are boon companions, but I had great expectations, and these atoned for all. My father died, my mother survived him but six months. I was in affluent circumstances—my expectations were realized. Getting weary of farming and parish politics,

best

I began to think what I should do to employ my money as well as my time, and, that I might not stand still for want of advice, mentioned my wishes to a friend who made investments of capital his chief study and amusement. 'Nothing could be easier than to double mine in less than five years if I would.' Of course I would if I could; so, suddenly, as if by enchantment, I became a great iron master, a millwright, a precious stone dealer, a coal merchant, a railway director, a gold miner, a silver miner, a copper miner, a sperm candle manufacturer, an economic national milk purveyor, and heaven only knows what else, and, to cut a long story short, here I am, your very humble servant, Mr. Thornton. But pass the wine, we must not let Messrs. Halley and Co. suppose we are beaten; the intelligence, my dear fellow, that we were pining would be sweet music in their ears; we know for certain

they make their enquiries, and must have the credit of keeping up our appetites, and the wherewithal to satisfy them, too."

"No, no," said I, "the starving pining system will avail nothing, when the day of payment ~~must~~ come at last, but to keep *is likely to* him starving, pining on ~~up~~ till he pine himself into the grave, who deludes himself with the hope that his miseries will plead in his behalf, with those whose hearts, if they have any, are harder than mill stones!"

"Faith, and that's true enough!" responded Colville. "You have heard, of course, of poor H—, an English clergyman, in for debt here some time ago?"

"No—what was it?"

"During his confinement in this very room, his wife lay ill in the lower town without hope of recovery. At last they brought him the intelligence that she was dying, and wished, if it were possible, to take her last farewell. What could he do? Removal

from the gaol till his debts were paid was not to be expected. Friends, however, were not wanting, who, coming forward, offered to be security to any amount, if he might be allowed to attend his wife's death-bed. No, the boon was refused—cruelly, wickedly refused, no doubt in the expectation that, rather than see their countryman in such affliction, his friends would pay his debts; the prayer of the poor wife was not granted, and the creditors had the gratification of knowing that they had added another pang to the heart of an Englishman, ~~but they were not wholly successful,~~ but they succeeded in effecting his liberation on the morning of the funeral, the mourning coach calling for him at the gaol. But that is not so bad as the story of poor Reynolds at St. Omer. If you're in the humour for the dolefuls, it may do to put in the journal. Well then, being on a visit to a college-friend there, Reynolds fell desperately in love with a beautiful B

and devoted;

young girl, of respectable rank, but without fortune, a model of all that was charming and virtuous; this was enough for him. Sanguine and enthusiastic, he refused to listen for a moment to the remonstrances of his friends, but, setting all obstacles aside by the assurance that his mother's jointure, devolving on him at her death by his grandfather's will, would be his in less than twelvemonths, as he would then be of age, he determined to please himself. With Rosalie for his bride, and five hundred a-year to complete their happiness, what was there to desire more? so the day of their nuptials was fixed. About a month before this, her brother, who had been sent to Paris to complete his studies as an advocate, led astray by ~~some~~ dissipated companions, got into debt, and, making his troubles known to Rosalie, Reynolds, to save him from arrest, as his father, though holding a responsible office under the government, was too poor

to advance the needful ~~had~~ became surety for the amount ~~on~~ the strength of his next remittances from England, ~~but~~ his engagement to Rosalie had got wind, and soon travelled fast enough to reach the ears of his friends at home; the stoppage of supplies was the consequence, and a peremptory order from his father to return, under pain of his severest displeasure, to England. Reynolds was staggered; but to relinquish, almost at the moment of fruition, all his fondest hopes—to renounce Rosalie for ever—no, no, that was impossible! it would break her heart even to mention such a thought. He would write a conciliatory

letter to his father ~~and~~ he was sure if he could only see her, it would be enough. Well, the days and weeks flew away quickly enough, as they usually do with lovers, till the bill for which he ~~had been~~ guarantee ~~was~~ became due. He had hardly given it a thought, and now had to make the fatal dis-

closure of his utter inability to meet it. Time could not be obtained ~~as~~ his father was known to be rich ~~as~~ Monsieur Gaspard could not raise the money at the moment ~~so~~ Reynolds was arrested and thrown into gaol.

“ But he preferred,” he declared, “ any sacrifice to a separation from Rosalie, which his return to England must have produced: come to the worst, he had only to wait a few months, and should then be his own master, and they could then snap their fingers at all the world, and be happy as devoted love could make them; so he wrote home again, making his father acquainted with the circumstances of his imprisonment, but expressing his resolution never to renounce an union on which all his hopes of happiness were fixed ~~as~~ he would rather,” he declared, “ be carried from the prison to his grave.”

Weeks elapsed ~~but~~ his father did not write, and, apparently, had forgotten him.

In spite of all his heroism, however, it was evident that his health, never strong, was suffering severely from confinement and anxiety, a certificate of which was despatched by his medical attendant to his father without his knowledge.

One morning a tall elderly gentleman, with a pale thin face and snow-white hair, accompanied by a confidential servant, on whose arm he leaned occasionally for support, sought admittance at the door of Monsieur Gaspard.

“Did a young lady of the name of Rosalie Gaspard live there?” enquired the stranger, evidently regarding with surprise and deep admiration the beautiful brunette that had opened the door to him, and was welcoming him with such sweet smiles; and they say when he announced himself to be the father of her lover, the scene that followed would have melted a heart of adamant. Is it not astonishing when people, whatever may have been their differences,

have a mind to be reconciled, how easily they put aside, or make light of every impediment to their reunion. From the moment he saw Rosalie, Mr. Reynolds had forgiven all his son's transgressions; he could not help acknowledging to himself that he had never beheld two more beautiful black eyes than were now gazing affectionately on him, filled with tears; he could hardly wonder at a boy being fascinated by them—remembered that his mother's, when a girl, were as like them as two peas—had first fallen in love with her at the Assembly Rooms at Cheltenham for her eyes, the toast of all Gloucestershire; and this Rosalie, she was even more charming than the young rascal had painted her. He was agreeably surprised, too, to find that her father's station, if not exalted, was not mean. Had he been a *marchand*, though rich as Rothschild, nothing would have reconciled him to the union of his child with the daughter of a

tradesman ; but Monsieur Gaspard was an officer of the government, of a certain rank and entitled to promotion, and his family had figured honourably in the last revolution. A visit to the prison was resolved on without delay ; but it was agreed that Monsieur Gaspard should precede them and break to Everard Reynolds the news of his father's arrival, as it was feared in his present state of health, and having lately given way to fits of despondency, that the sudden shock of his arrival might be too much for him. Think what must have been their horror to find him in bed a corpse—still warm, and lying calmly on his back as if asleep—he could not have been dead an hour !

For a time it appeared he had borne up against his misfortunes with all the obstinacy of a proud, unbending spirit ; but the gloomy prospect of so long a trial, added to his father's anger and desertion, were too

much for a mind like Reynolds's, and it was soon evident to his physician, that unless speedily liberated, his health would be sacrificed; but he had never anticipated so tragical a result as was now made manifest.

Everard had contrived to get a phial of laudanum, which was found under his pillow empty, together with two letters, one addressed to his father, the other to Rosalie. The old man was inconsolable; but great as was his grief, what was it to poor Rosalie's?

For weeks she lay unconscious of all around her, till, rallying from the first shock, the partially recollection of her loss burst anew upon her mind, and she sunk never to be restored. In less than three months she was followed by her family and friends to her grave, and they say, if ever a poor girl died of a broken heart, she did."

February 25.—While Colville was telling his story of Everard Reynolds yesterday, a poor fellow-debtor, by name Bolter, from

— chamber No. 1, who, somehow, from his necessities and dependance on our good offices almost for support, no less than his patience and good temper, had acquired a sort of claim on our sympathy, and the privilege of free *entrée*, lounged into the room, and leaning carelessly, as was his usual wont, against the door-post, with a short Milo clay pipe in his mouth, seemed to listen with great interest to the recital of poor Reynolds's melancholy history.

There is a cut about Bolter, in his tight old black trowsers and Oxonians, his white and pink-spotted neckcloth, with its full flow over his breast, the flashily-cut tweed shooting-jacket and waistcoat, and his eighteen-penny glazed “wide-awake,” stuck knowingly on one side, that cannot be mistaken—it bespeaks the man; at the first glance, one sees the whole character and calibre of the individual—a careless, laughing, good-natured, dare-devil sort of gentle-

man, whose predilection for low scenes and society has given him that unmistakable stamp, which it seems the pride of men of his kidney to put on; still, however one's own ~~tastes~~ ~~might~~ differ with those of Mr. Bolter, or be indisposed to fall in with all his peculiar views and oddities, there is that about him which disarms severe reproach, and always excites more pity than anger. Whether it is that his better senses have been deadened by vicious indulgences, paralyzed by drink, or obfuscated by tobacco—or whether it ~~might~~ be that his wits, or rather the best part of them—for he is no fool—are now dormant for want of a more genial soil wherein to flourish, there are times when he exhibits such simplicity—such apparent mental unsophistication, that but for some occasional glimpses of an opposite tendency, manifested by sundry little dodges and doublings, not usually found in absolute fatuity, one would be apt to conclude

that he *is* the victim of simplicity, and more deserving of sympathy than censure.

But, unfortunately, there are times when the tender care of number one will peep out, and then all mystification is at an end, it is evident to any one, with half an eye, that there is decidedly more of the "wide-awake" in Mr. Bolter than in his hat. To particularize the sundry little instances in which this, not unnatural weakness by any means, is betrayed is unnecessary; but it is due to him to acknowledge that no man *in extremis* ever met misfortune more cheerfully, or submitted to the many humiliations, ever attendant in its train, with better grace than does Bolter. True, he has a creed of his own not the most orthodox, or calculated to do him service; he professes to regard all men as rogues by nature—circumstances only tending, more or less, to disguise or discover the inherent plague-spot.—"How do you know," he will say sometimes, when we get

on the subject of hereditary tendencies to diseases—for there are few learned subjects that havn't their turn—“ how do you know, but that the Archbishop of Canterbury would prig a penny loaf, if put to it, to save a sick wife and eight ~~starving~~ children ~~to morrow?~~ ^{from starvation?} ~~famished~~ That's a corker, any how !”

It certainly *was* impossible to say what the Archbishop might be tempted to do under such extreme circumstances, so Bolter's tears of joy flow on, as usual, unchecked. But his views of men and things have a wider scope than appears at first sight; he holds with the Jesuits, that what is not known can do no harm. A failure he considers the chief sin—success the best proof of merit. A conscience is an arrant coward—lawyers and priests, like doctors' drugs and brewers' beer, necessary evils; he does not by any means object to public worship—it is expedient for example's sake, but he prefers evening to morning service, as he thinks

and a pipe,

a man's nerves are in a far more befitting state for comfortable prayer after dinner than before; he attaches great importance, however, to a white "choker," as he calls it, on Sundays—the rest he leaves to that wide margin, the chapter of accidents. If *sometimes* we endeavour at all, as we ~~often~~ do from feelings of commiseration—for in truth he is in as pitiable a condition, with all his free doctrines, as a man well can be—to argue with him, or to draw him into something like a more healthy train of reasoning, he will break it all up in a moment, by laughing till the tears roll down his cheeks, and his nose brightens like a burning coal. It is useless to reason, as it is impossible to be seriously angry with him; say ~~you~~ do what you would, you could not make him reflect—far less cross; ~~you~~ laugh, and sing, and pun, and spout, and ~~chaff~~ and chatter he will, although obliged to be his own cobler,

and dependent on our bounty nearly six
every days out of seven for his food.

But Mr. Bolter is a bit of a politician as, well as humourist, and professes to know a great deal about public men and measures. What his peculiar views are of either, it is not by any means necessary to state here; indeed, it would be very difficult to make them understood, they comprehend such an extensive range, and include such an infinite list of wrongs and remedies, and such a boundless margin for casualties and possibilities, that it is better, on every ground, to wait patiently for their development, till, *in propria persona*, he has an opportunity from the hustings to satisfy his constituents of his principles; and if he can do that, what more can be required. It is quite evident that "he knows a thing or two," though the utmost license he ever allows to escape him, and very prudently so, as a candidate for public suffrages, is an occasional philippic

propria persona - with a circumflex over the a final - in the ablative

maybe

funny

184

TOM THORNTON.

maybe, or a ~~kind~~ word, or a sharp hit neatly planted, in the shape of a *jeu d'esprit*, or home-thrust, or a pun or riddle coined for the nonce, and which, to judge by his own delight, poor ~~Theodore Hood~~ himself might have been proud of. But I must leave Mr. Bolter to speak for himself.

He had taken his station, as I said before, against the door-post, and when Colville had finished his story:—

“ That was a slow move of Reynolds, any how,” said he, taking the pipe from his mouth, and tapping the bowl of it against the toe of his shoe; “ whip me, gents, if I’d have walked off from five hundred a year, and a pretty girl like that.”

“ Put that nasty pipe down, old fellow,” bawled Colville; “ recollect you are in the society of gentlemen, and take a cigar, if you please.”

“ By all means,” responded Bolter, helping himself, and holding out his fore finger

and thumb for my cigar, wherewith to light his own ; " by your leave, Mr. Thornton—thank you politely ; the mild W's I see—he, he, he ! Why is Mr. Colville like Moses of the Minories ?"

" Can't conceive," said I, looking ~~stead~~^{pointedly} fastly at his nose—Colville's nose was a pure roman.

" Give it up ?" sputtered Bolter ; " because, don't you see, he invests everything he does with a grace peculiar to himself."

" Help yourself to a glass of wine, ~~Bol~~^{old fellow}
~~ter~~," applauded Colville ; " and ~~where is~~
Swift ?"

" Over the way with the Frenchman, winning sous like ~~the Beggar of Bethnal Green~~, he makes himself scarce to-morrow, and is giving them a wind up."

" What a fellow !" exclaimed Colville ; " why, what he squanders at cards, and spends flirting away with Madlle D—
~~one o'clock; didn't ye know—~~
~~was to be a worse~~
'where's that chap

every morning over the *petits verres*, would pay Marteau to bring your case on, Bolter."

"That's true enough," replied Bolter, removing the cigar from his mouth, and looking down his nose; "but, you see, every man has a right to do what he likes with his own, as pea-green Hayne said, when he lighted the candle with a ten pound note.

I'll tell you what it is, gents, Marteau be hanged—there's no law in France for an Englishman, not even if he'll pay for it! I've been thinking what I shall do—write direct to the President, and get him to see fair play; that'll lick 'em—wont it?"

We expressed considerable doubt whether such a mode of proceeding would have the desired effect.

"Then," said he, after a few moments deliberation, "whip me, if I don't give them the slip some dark night over the wall there."

We reminded him of the depth of the

wall—not less than fifty feet, and of the sentries with fixed bayonets to welcome him at the bottom.

“And d’ye think I don’t know a dodge, gents, to lick twenty such sour-faced, soup-swilling chaps as they? Only think of that cove Ouvrard helping every body over the wall but himself—tell me, if he wasn’t a brick?”

“What about him?” said Colville—“founded on fact, of course?”

“Every word of it, I’ll pledge myself,” replied Bolter; “law! have you never heard that story before? well, then, I don’t mind telling you, if you wish it. You see, Ouvy hadn’t fulfilled some contract with the Government — he was a large sort of contractor and loan-monger, and all that sort of thing—well, he would’t do the work, and he would’t come down with the penalty—‘You’re a cheat,’ said the Government—‘*Tu quoque*,’ said Ouvy; so, they ~~arrested~~ nabbed him.”

and threw him into quod. This was exceedingly unpleasant to the feelings of a gentleman, but there was no help for it—he had to make his choice, d'ye see, whether in quod he would make himself at home there for five years, or fork out the tin—he gave the preference to the former. ‘Is this the best me? you can do for a gentleman?’ said Ouvy, as over they showed him his apartments. ‘The best disengaged at present,’ answered the governor; ‘by and bye you shall have your choice of those opposite, when empty.’—‘I don't mind the figure,’ whispered Ouvy, and looking the governor full in the face, ‘how much would make those lodgings mine?’—‘Not less than twenty thousand francs, Monsieur?’—‘Is that all?’ said Ouvy; ‘what if I pay their little accounts—the apartments will then be mine?’ The governor cried couldn't, could not speak, he bowed assent, the Concierge thought he was mad, but Ouvy rap didn't care a fig what they thought; whip set him down for a madman; was regularly flabbergasted—took his cap off by instinct—

are so obliging as to

gents,

TOM THORNTON.

189

me, if he didn't pay every sou, and keep possession for five years; and a roaring life

he led with his friends, eating and drinking,

playing and puffing away like bricks. Don't you see, Mr. Thornton, that if a native have

a fancy for lying where his creditors put him for five years, he comes out as clean as

a ~~new~~ whistle; so, Master Ouvy preferred spiting the Government to parting with the

tin

“ He certainly deserved ~~a most handsome~~ ~~an elegant~~ suit of apartments,” observed Colville, “ for he paid a pretty rent for them.”

“ Bless your heart, a bagatelle!—he thought no more of twenty thousand francs than I do of these 'bacco ashes. Has any gentleman seen a newspaper to-day?”

Colville shook his head, and so did I.

“ I'll lay any gentleman,” continued Bolter, looking up to the cieling, “ my best milo to a five pound note, that Ministers are out before this day month.”

“ Done !” cried Colville.

“ Don’t be rash,” advised Bolter ~~mildly~~ —/, and keeping his eyes fixed on the ceiling.

“ Perhaps Mr. Bolter is in possession of information from high quarters,” suggested I, “ which ~~we~~ don’t know of, Colville ?”

“ They’ll be beaten, gentlemen, on the Income Tax—that’s it !”

“ You don’t say so ?” said Colville.

“ An iniquitous tax, gentlemen ~~the~~, the country wont stand it any longer.” —/

shall “ How much ~~will~~ you and I be gainers, old fellow, by its repeal, I should like to know ?” laughed Colville.

“ We are now arguing on public grounds, Mr. Colville,” said I; “ but what will you have in its place?—the country can’t do without it, or an equivalent, Bolter ?” Mr.
j/

“ Plenty of *them*, Mr. Thornton—let them tax the luxuries, let them touch the rich man’s pocket. For instance—there’s Jeames, and there’s Robert the butler, and

Richard the coachman, and Popham the page, and the valet, and the lady's maid—charge them double; and a third more to all four-wheeled carriages, and riding horses; all scents and perfumes, hair-dyes, cosmetics, and lap-dogs, to pay fifty per cent.; then, there's shaving—that's a luxury would pay splendidly."

" *Diable!*" exclaimed Colville, " and become a nation of Moses?"

" Not a bit of it—make it compulsory for every man to shave once a day, with all incomes above fifty per annum, and not less than once a week, for all labourers—paupers only ~~to be~~ exempted. To say nothing, gents, of the improvement in the national appearance, and if a ~~stop~~ is not put to their precious Russo-Prusso-Belgo-Gallic pranks, as Mr. Punch says, what the end of it all will be makes one shudder to contemplate—consider the demand for razors; besides, to take higher ground, Mr. Thorn-

ton—make beards and moustaches the badge of poverty, and England's foulest reproach ; her paupers and her unions will ^{then} soon be remembered only as monstrosities of the past."

" Upon my word," said I, " I never thought of it in that light. But with respect to the inequalities in the operations of the tax, its most odious feature ^{are you} not of opinion that some mode of equalization might be adopted, and a greater distinction made, Mr. Bolter, between incomes derived from property, and incomes from labour ?"

" Nothing can be clearer," replied Bolter, " than that the tax, as it stands, is as foul a fraud, as ever disgraced the statute book ; but there's a good deal of twaddle about those incomes from property and incomes from labour going the round, and I'll prove it."

" Hear, hear !" cried Colville.

warming with his subject,

"Take a case," continued Bolter, "Mr. Colville's father dies, and leaves forty thousand between him and his brother John."

"Don't they wish they may get it!"

~~laughed~~ Colville.

roared

"Well, John's a plodding, long-headed, ~~sharp~~ ^{plain} sort of a gent, and chooses to embark his capital in business; Harry, less ambitious of filthy lucre, lends his to Government, contented with less profit, but on the faith of continuing to enjoy a safe and sure return for his money, beyond which no ingenuity nor exertions of his own can raise it. It so happens that Master John's spec ^{up a trump,} ~~out so profitable~~ ^{dyer see} gents, don't turn ~~out so profitable~~ as he expected, and, after all, his income is not as good as Harry's. Now ^{Jack} labours, they say, for his; and Harry gets his without trouble or anxiety—how stand the two in the event of an income tax? By what principle of justice can Jack claim exemption—because he labours, and his business is precarious and

fluctuating, whereas, Harry, poor simple-minded, credulous individual, must pay the penalty for trusting to a Government whose very next successors may be at liberty to fleece him for his folly? With thousands, Mr. Thornton, plans of life ~~more~~ ^{mere} matters ~~more~~ of inclination and caprice than any-
a donkey, arn't ^{hold and} thing else, I maintain, therefore, that as Jack made his bed, so he must lie; and it is very hard indeed on poor Harry, if, because Jack's is rather less downy than he expected, that the feathers are to be filched from Harry's to prevent jealousy between them."

poor "But," suggested I, "let us take the case of—"

"By George!" cried Colville, "there's half past five o'clock, and the kettle not on yet for the tea. Bolter old fellow ~~if you're~~ going down—"

"Not a word," insisted Mr. Bolter, drinking off his half empty glass, and seizing the kettle; "another time, Mr. Thornton, we will

*That's a settler for 'em, anyhow—
 a "corker", by Jove! I applauded Colville*

'twixt you and me,

that

TOM THORNTON.

195

settle ~~the~~ question of taxes—there's a good deal to be said pro and con. But I've an idea in my head ~~will~~ will astonish them one of these days."

"Don't overlook the interests, old fellow," reminded Colville, "of the small annuitants with seven children, whatever you do! A smasher, eh, Bolter?"

~~"Regular corker!" and off went that great politician~~ to provide the ways and means for the evening meal. So it is high time that the plates and glasses were cleared away, and the kettle humming on the fire.

Having made all straight, we descend for half an hour's exercise in the court. This brings us to six o'clock; and now, having but one hour more before we are parted for the night, like true philosophers we endeavour to make the most of it. Colville lights a cigar, while I, far fonder of a cup of tea, lay out the tea-pot, cup and saucer,

K 2

"He, he, he!" giggled ~~that great politician~~ ^{—a regular corker} — don't be afraid, "and off he went

and my halfpenny roll, in a manner no one who knew me twelve months ago would believe possible. By the time the toast is made, the tea is brewed, and then thoughts of home, and my comfortable fireside, and my wife, who would make any home a paradise, flit across my mind. There is always something so cozy and domesticating in tea-time, it seems associated with so many thoughts of happier days. The heart, that is at all dilatable, expands over a cup of tea, and hot buttered toast or sally-luns, and to the weary harassed spirit, what music so soothing as the singing of the friendly tea-kettle on the hob. What I should do if it were not for my friend's fire and his hospitable welcome, to which I am altogether indebted for many other little fireside comforts ~~as well as~~ my cup of tea, I do not know; for my room being destitute of fireplace, or of any possible mode by which one could be contrived, it stands to reason that

if he were of hermit's habits or a man-hater, I must often go very cold and comfortless to bed, and he would not have the satisfaction, which he now has, of knowing that he has benefitted one of the most agreeable and deserving persons of his acquaintance.

But all this time the tea has been brewed and enjoyed, and the last hour's chat is brought to a close by the footsteps of the Concierge, who, keys and lantern in hand, has come to bid us *bon soir*, and leave us to our meditations for the night. Twelve long dismal hours must elapse before we shall hear those footsteps again, when we are awoke, if we happen to be asleep, by the harsh grating of the iron bolts, as they are shot back with a delicacy of touch peculiar to gaolers. But I think I hear you ask, my dear aunt, what ~~you can~~ find to do, Tom, to pass the hours, and keep the blood from freezing in your veins till bed-time? It is a very natural and kind question indeed, for

8

can you

8

sunday // those to ask who have not their own beds to make ~~for~~ their teathings to wash up ~~for~~ their boots to clean, and ~~other~~ little matters to attend to, before they sit down to books and pen and paper. That bed-making is a healthy exercise; no wonder the doctors recommend dyspeptic, pale-faced, chillblained young ladies to make their own beds—there is nothing equals it for circulating the blood. By the time I have smoothed down the counterpane and tucked all round, I feel no want of a fire, and hardly know that the floor is stone; I then sit down to my books and papers till eleven, making it a rule in general, as the last stroke of the Haute Ville clock dies away, to shut up for the night; and ~~having~~ having committed myself and all my cares and troubles to Him, as I said before, whose ever-watchful eye has regard no less for the wretched pallet of the miserable than the luxurious couch of ease and happiness, I try hard to fall asleep, in the still

unfailing hope that to-morrow will compensate for all the trials and short-comings of to-day.

February 26.—I have been amusing myself, for ~~the~~ want of something better to do, by watching the wretched beings in the court-yard beneath my window. Till within a few years, the two yards for the convicts and debtors, now divided by a wall about twelve feet high, were open for the use of the male prisoners indiscriminately. The construction of the whole building, for all purposes of a prison, is very deficient, hardly any distinction being made between the debtors and criminals of the worst cast—the former occupying one division of the court, barely fifteen yards across, the latter the ~~other~~, ^{opposite}, except when the gaol overflows; then the better sort of convicts are frequently lodged with the debtors. The wing called the *Hotel d'Angleterre* is always devoted to the English debtors; here there

are four rooms; should it so happen that there are more than that number of English in, they are stowed away with the French till there is accommodation in the *Hotel*, which is regarded by the prisoners generally as a sort of privileged Elysium, set apart for such choice spirits alone as *Milors Anglais*. The situation of my chamber being at the extremity of the *Hotel*, immediately adjoining the governor's apartments, my window is just above the convicts yard, about twenty feet above it, so that I have, when I please, a full view of all the goings on of that scene of filth and misery. The appearance of some of the poor wretches is cleanly and decent enough, the pump handle being in pretty early requisition among them; as soon as the doors are open in the morning its work commences, and on it goes till breakfast time. Some of them avail themselves of it more than others, and seem to have a little more respect for appearances, and the

process of scouring and combing is not completed till the call of the Concierge draws them, like famished dogs, around the soup-pail. But many look as if soap and water had been ever strangers to them, and these seem to have little else to do, or think of all day, than to saunter up and down in all weathers, playing off practical jokes on each other, or killing the vermin that swarm about them. One youngster has just been holding down his head, while another operates on his neck and shoulders with indefatigable perseverance, and then submits his own sacred person to a like ordeal. What they would do but for this favourite pastime I don't know; for as to any sources of occupation, or amusement of a rational character, with the exception of occasionally making a few rush hassocks, there seems to be none; in gross indolence and apathy, they loll and roll about, with nothing better to kill time and drown reflection, than keeping

the tattered remains of their garments from falling into pieces, waging perpetual war against the common enemy, and waiting for the soup-pails.

The gaol uniform of dark grey, worn by the convicts, is neat and proper enough; but the rags and tatters that barely serve to preserve decency, ~~with~~ those in for short periods, are loathsome in the extreme; how they hold together at all is the wonder. I watched a tall sickly-looking young fellow, just now of about twenty, who was arranging his dress, and it seemed to be a work of no little difficulty to get it into any thing like proper trim, ~~it~~ it took him full half-an-hour, with the assistance of strings and pins, and two patient valets, to save it from total dismemberment; and he had scarcely completed his toilet to his satisfaction, when, driven to fury by a fresh attack from the enemy within, he had again to submit himself for examination to the two professors of

entymology, who seemed, from the interest they took in their labours, highly edified by their scientific researches.

They were in the midst of ~~the investigation~~ when the signal was given for dinner, and, ye powers of confusion, what a scene! professors and pupils and patients forgot everything in a moment but the gnawings of a hungry stomach, as the luscious steam of the soup pails was wafted through the air, one and all, dish in hand, bolted to the charge, and then commenced an onslaught that beggars all description. Ladle in hand, stands the Concierge on these occasions like a great potentate, wielding his baton in the midst of his subjects: having, at length, ranged them in a semi-circle, for convenience of distribution, the savoury work begins in good earnest, and, as each is supplied with his ladle full—proportioned exactly to the capacity of each basin, off they go one by one to do justice to the ~~delicious~~ mess; and

creaking

right good it smells, and tastes, too, I have no doubt, as the speedily-devoured contents testify, when every man goes and washes his basin at the pump to be ready for the next summons. It seems ~~as~~ as far as I can observe, for I have not tasted it, although urged by the Concierge to-day to do so—to be a good substantial soup with the *bouilli* intermixed, and thickened with the *feve blanche*, and with potatoes and carrots and bread, to be by no means a contemptible diet, however Monsieur Soyer might be disposed to turn his nose up at it.

recommended “*C'est excellente!*” Monsieur Thornton, ~~observed~~ the Concierge to-day, as I stood watching him filling the dishes of the Frenchmen opposite; “*c'est excellente! voulez vous la goûter, Monsieur?*”

“*C'est excellente, sans doute, Monsieur le Concierge,*” I replied: “*mais, pas aujourd'hui, merci.*”

As if to prove to me that he had not ~~re-~~

eulogized

commended his soup unadvisedly, he raised the ladle to his lips, and took a mouthful; but whether it was too hot, or that he had ~~had~~ ^{that it was} had his breakfast, he knows best himself ~~but~~ —/ out it went on the pavement, he the Concierge, still declaring it was “ *excellente!* ”

We are pretty sure when soup times are at hand; there is an animation among our neighbours below which nothing else produces; then, when the cry of “ *soupe, soupe!* ” is heard, ye powers! what a rush—what a clatter! yes, and better appetites, I’ll warrant, than ever did duty at the Reform, or even at the Lord Mayor’s dinner, though, by all accounts, the soups there don’t go begging. But this is progressing at a fine rate. Perhaps it is the infallible consequence of talking about eating and drinking, one gets so interested in the subject, and the links, as it were ~~in~~ the chain of good living are so closely connected, that it is the easiest and the pleasantest thing in

the world to ring the changes and shift the courses, till one gets insensibly from the discussion of poor law porridge into the very midst of *soupe à la bisque des ecrivisses* and sillery champagne. Like the Concierge and Prince Albert, when they do us the honour to taste pauper's porridge, “*c'est excellente*,”—though I never knew a prince or a relieving officer who did not at heart prefer a tureen of even mock-turtle when he could get it.

February 28.—Stone floors have their recommendations, and marble halls are delightful, as are pellucid fountains and murmuring rills, to talk of and contemplate on a broiling July day; but I must own they make the teeth chatter in my head when, after setting for a couple of hours on these icy flags, with the cold striking up to my middle, I take up a volume of Tom Moore, and try to persuade myself that I am not freezing under his sunny *tableaux*. It was

mere cruelty to plan a room like this, and leave out a hole for a fire-place; but, no—that would have been too great a luxury.

N'importe as long as one has the use of his legs, and the nerve to pace up and down double quick time, ~~one~~ may almost set the cold at defiance, and at the same time learn a salutary lesson of patience and endurance. “*Si vous avez décidé, Monsieur,*” said I to the great grocer, “*de me tenir ici, il me faut rester avec patience et résignation.*”

There can be nothing a French creditor cares so little to hear about as the resignation of his debtor.

Quite a levée in my room this morning—*and* Blanche, Alice Faulkner—smuggled in as my sister by Sanguine, who is to do penance for it—George Fleetwood, and Marteau. To have taken us all on canvass in full consultation would have been a fine subject for an historical picture. Renewed assurances from Mowbray of his speedy ability to make

it all right about the bill. Plumley and O'Hara still in Paris, but expected back in a day or two. How every fresh bud of hope promises to blossom forth into fair flower—no end of interest at work in my behalf; well, if it only keep the heart from desponding, it is best to look on the bright side. That day which dawns with hope's cheering ray, however faint or far off, is ever a bright one to the prisoner—it is that alone which sustains the drooping spirit as he paces up and down his solitary cell—
~~—~~ to-morrow, to-morrow, and to-morrow—as the notches are added daily to his reckoning, there seems one less to note; for, in spite of despair itself, there is a definite period in the most forlorn circumstances when the imagination conjures up visions of happiness—when his prison door shall be thrown open, and he shall triumph over his enemies, and walk forth a free and fearless man.

Poor Barnard! for six long years did he

inhabit the room next to this ~~for~~ for six sum-
mers and winters had he been the tenant of
that wretched chamber, when the Revolu-
tion of 1848 set him at liberty. What
must have been his sensations when the
joyful intelligence came that he was a free
man? He had contemplated, they say,
four years longer incarceration, ten being
the extreme period required by the French
laws for debts to any amount. Never was
man more patient under affliction. There
are evidences remaining in his room of a
long tenancy—sundry efforts at comfort—
here and there a few fixtures ~~not~~ not landlord's
hooks for ~~a~~ summer blind, shelves for his
larder, papered walls, a mantel-piece, evi-
dently after a private design, and fire-place,
and other minor matters suggestive of a
settled and contented character.

I thought, when I entered these walls,
that my liberation must come before a
week, or my heart would fail me: when

they told me how poor Barnard had lingered out six years here, the thought was sickening. Often have I asked myself since—suppose I knew I must, like him, make it my home for the same length of time, how could I bear it? Probably he once thought and said the same, but he did bear it, nay, was cheerful and resigned under the burthen, and it did not crush him. The truth is, we know not what we can bear, till we ~~are tried and~~ ⁸ must submit; but this we do know, that if we are patient and enduring unto the end, we shall not have more laid on us than we can sustain.

Methinks the governor and Monsieur le Concierge must have looked somewhat confounded, when, after the edict for abolition of imprisonment for debt, issued under the fiat of Monsieur Ledru Rollin and Co. the debtors' apartments became tenantless; then indeed was Othello's occupation gone, and the whole tribe of gaol functionaries, agents,

attorneys, and hangers on, must have felt extremely uncomfortable. Ledru Rollin was no friend to the *huissiers*—he owed them a grudge, they say, and directed his first master stroke, on his accession to power, against a law and its tools that had kept himself in perpetual hot water. The *huissiers* were at their wits end—the bread was taken out of their mouths; but, now that Ledru has had his reign, and the old law been restored, so hungry has abstinence made ~~them~~, that no chance escapes them; the consequence of which is, that the debtors' apartments are tenanted again, the governor and Monsieur le Concierge in finer feather than ever, and Boulogne gaol begins ~~one~~ more to wear its pristine aspect of ~~prosperity~~ *activity*. But *la belle France* is an unsettled nation—another *émeute*, and another Ledru Rollin, and again there may be a chance for poor Barnards, and an end to the triumphs of Monsieur Halley and Company. And yet,

these worthies,

why desire the downfal of Huissier Halley and Co.? The laws are society's safest bulwarks, and cannot be enforced without tools; a pretty sharp one they have got in Monsieur Halley—a keen hand, a knowing blade.

The French *huissier* is somewhat the same sort of worthy as our English bailiff, *but* a cleverer fellow, and a person of much greater consequence in his vocation; a mighty man of mischief too, and a powerful engine of evil when it suits his interest to be so. In small places like Boulogne, where every one is soon known, his power and influence are considerable. From the moment an Englishman puts his foot on shore here, if he be not *en route*, he may rest assured that the police are not the only sureties for his good behaviour; the

also huissiers have noted his arrival, the quantity and quality of his baggage, and in less than a week the names of every tradesman

from whence he came, where going, his baggage, day passes of expences, and of damages,

with whom he deals. Furthermore, they have acquainted themselves with the extent of his disbursements, his establishment, what connections he has in the town, and, if he be of a communicative turn, will not be long in fathoming the amount of his income, and the nature even of his secret thoughts. But to form anything like a correct idea of the *huissier's* character and functions, he ought to be studied from the moment he has scented game; then are put in play all his wits and sagacity, and it would be as difficult for the poor hare in view to escape from the greyhound's jaws, as for a hapless debtor to give such a keen hound as Halley the slip, when he has once been started in pursuit.

Let us suppose the case—it is not an unfrequent one—of an Englishman in Boulogne, in debt with an angry *marchand* for a hundred and forty-eight francs, two francs, observe, under the point arrestable; and let

us grant that the clerk has called two or three times for payment without success, and is therefore justified in doubting the ability of his customer to settle—what does he do?—he slips into Monsieur Halley's, or some other huissier's house, and ten minutes' confidential confab puts the huissier in possession, if not already informed, of all the particulars; from that moment Mr. Augustus Fitzhonourable is a marked man.

For a short time things go on smoothly enough—not a word nor sign of impatience on the part of his mercers reaches Mr. Fitzhonourable; on the contrary, he even contemplates the purchase of an indescribable cravat, which has courted his attention for the last week in Madame Bruin's window; Madame, knowing his style, has stuck it there as a trap—the booby bites, and is caught—down it goes in the book, and, oh, the artfulness of Madame! the amount of Mr. Augustus Fitzhonourable's little me-

moire is now just two francs and a-half *above* the point arrestable. Off goes Madame like a shot—another five-minutes consultation with the huissier, and straightway that mighty man of mischief sets about his work *all* with the acumen and energy of a practiced hand.

His object is now two-fold—to insure the arrest of his victim, and to multiply by every possible means his own profits thereby. To enable him to obtain from the President of the Tribunal a warrant of summary process, it is necessary that a declaration be made to the effect that Mr. Augustus Fitzhonourable is about to give his creditors

the slip, nothing can be easier than to find some accommodating conscience to swear, if need be, that Mr. Fitzhonourable contemplates bolting, although, perhaps, such a thought never entered that gentleman's head. Hereupon, the President's warrant for arrest, in the event of non-payment on

italics demand is issued, and placed in the huisier's hands.

About ten o'clock, and just as Mr. Fitzhonourable has finished breakfast, and, in happy ignorance of the snares that have been laid for him, is adjusting Madame Bruin's new neck-tie, greatly to his satisfaction, previous to a stroll that heavenly day with Isabel and Georgy and the nurse, to the *Vallée du Denacre*, an unusual bustle is perceptible in the passage, followed by heavy footsteps coming up stairs, and before Mr. Fitzhonourable has time to demand the cause of such an unceremonious intrusion, Monsieur Halley, accompanied by the usual officer for the preservation of peace—should Mr. Fitzhonourable, with the known pugilistic tendency of his countrymen, be disposed to show fight—and two ill-looking scamps, as we have elsewhere seen before, has bowed himself into his presence.

Startled, and pale as a ghost, stands Mr.

Fitzhonourable, wondering what he has done to deserve the honour of so much good company. There is a pause for half a minute, during which the huissier casts a hasty glance of scrutiny round the room—then on his prey ; it is but a glance, but sufficient to enable him to note what sort of a spirit he has to deal with ; while the Commissaire, standing apart, puts on a face of fearful dignity, the two attendants, meanwhile, exchanging looks and waiting with evident delight for the scene that is to follow. That scene has already been feebly depicted, and, as in that case, Mr. Augustus Fitzhonourable is most politely informed, that unless he can pay Madame Bruin's little memoire and the costs, there is but one alternative. A thunder-clap could not have more astounded the indignant Fitz, as in vain he tries to find words to express his not unnatural disgust.

“ It must be a mistake, it was quite

and who knew his father for so
many years, and had received so
much money from him and his family.

218

TOM THORNTON.

impossible that Madame Bruin, who knew ~~8~~
him so well, and with whom he had dealt
so long, could behave so unhandsomely ~~X~~ — /

~~T~~ There must be some mistake!"

Monsieur Halley knew better—" ~~T~~ There ~~T~~
was no mistake at all."

~~8~~ Fitz, you are caught; but you are willing
to rid yourself of your present company, and
all further acquaintance with them, by set- ~~8~~
tling, if needs must, Madame's demand ~~X~~ ~~8~~
~~8~~ Monsieur Halley thought as much, and so
has been casting up the amount total. Had
you been aware, Fitz, and made up your
mind to pay the debt when first entreated
by Monsieur Halley to do so, no arrest, of
course, would have been made, and twenty
frances or so would have covered all ex-
penses; the next time you will know better,
and recollect it is the aim and interest of
the huissier to make the arrest with all
possible expedition, whereby he pockets
additional present fees, and has greatly im- ~~8~~

italics

proved his chances of bagging many more.

halley Fitz, you are caught ~~at~~ the entrance of *halley* huissier number two has saved you from the trap laid for you by *halley* huissier number one, and your election to accompany Monsieur Halley and Co. to the *Haut Ville* is wisely made. You will doubtless find many friends to sympathize with you in your misfortune, but, take my word for it, none will stick closer to you than Monsieur Halley.

I say that you made your election to go to prison wisely, and I will tell you why. Had you adopted Halley's gentle hint to escape from Monsieur Martine, by bolting out of his reach, are you so simple as to suppose that you would have been let off so easily? Oh, no, it would have only been jumping from the frying-pan into the fire—you would have avoided Monsieur Martine's embrace, to fall into the arms of Monsieur Halley, you would have cheated the one out of his fees, to put them into the pocket

of the other. You don't know Monsieur Halley as well as I do, if you think him capable of a disinterested action ; don't you see his artifice ? As two arrests cannot be made on the same day, unless the first be satisfied by payment of the debt and costs, had you ~~paid~~ Madame Bruin's, you were immediately liable to arrest the second. But

say you, 'you had taken the hint, and were on your way, as fast as you could go to Calais.' Unfortunately others knew this as well as yourself, among the rest Monsieur Halley. Do you imagine that he would have lost the chance of doing such a good day's work ? My dear fellow, depend on it he had it in his mind's eye, when he counselled bolting from the fangs of Martine, to have you all to himself; ~~depend on it, what~~ with the combined assistance of the gendarmerie with his own infallible machinery, ere nightfall you would have been compelled

be assured that

to surrender yourself again a prisoner into the hands of the invincible Halley.

You see, therefore, that your election to walk straightway to durance vile, was, as I said before, wisely made. But you have balked the calculations of a dangerous man —you have thwarted his first manœuvre; still, you are in his power, and it will be the exception to the rule if you have not to smart preciously for your pains. You have submitted to your fate, and are lodged safely in your prison chamber; there, then, while the huissiers take breath and arrange their future plans in your behalf, I must leave you for the present with this friendly advice—to get together with all possible expedition the wherewithal to pay your debts in Boulogne, and, if ever you are fool enough to have another visit from the *italics* huissiers, take an adder into your bosom rather than make a confidant of Monsieur Halley. *Au revoir*, my dear Fitz, for the

present ; we will confer together again in a little while, and see how matters go on.

March 2.—How gloriously the sun shines forth to-day—how beautiful the heavens, as far as I can see them from my narrow window, not a cloud—how tranquil, how joyous

~~man's~~ seems all nature, smiling, happy, full of cheering promise ! and yet ~~the~~ heart is sad

~~—~~ — it need never have known a care, had it ~~how~~ preferred God's gift to man's. Ah, strange

~~—~~ infatuation ! ~~it~~ it is not till we become the dupes and victims of our own vile passions,

that we begin to see through the mists of ignorance and conceit that have blinded us ; ~~so long~~

it is not till we have forfeited our noblest rights, as rational and accountable creatures,

that the grievous extent of our sacrifices is made known ; then, if the mind can see at all, it appreciates, as never before it appreciated, the blessings it has forfeited—the bountiful provisions of Providence for its

~~happiness~~, the endless sources of unalloyed

joy and contentment that they unfold, and it is then, if ever, that we are brought to the bitter conviction, that all we have obtained, and for which we have exchanged our liberty, perhaps, and peace of mind for ever, has fallen, oh, how far short of those treasures that might have been ours, had we put out our talents to a profitable use, instead of making them scourges for our own perpetual torment.

Misfortune, they say, makes us philosophical; but it don't always best conduce to keep the pot boiling; so I will open my window, put some fresh water to my flowers, and give them the sweetest breath of fresh air I can, trim up my room, and, having made all as neat and orderly as possible, take my afternoon's turn in the court yard, and try, by keeping my eyes on that glorious sky, to break myself of a habit easily acquired, I assure you, in a prison yard—that of too close a regard for the pavement;

and as I gaze upward, and my thoughts soar beyond the dark scenes around me, to others far brighter and happier, my endeavour shall be to induce that tone of mind, more characteristic of true philosophy than all the rest put together, ~~and~~ which will make my prison chamber, with its stone floor and iron-guarded window, more endurable on my return to it. A butterfly is frisking before me as I write, as if to invite me out on such a lovely morning; well, life with us both is short, and while the sun shines let us make the hay; wait a moment then—nay, don't be off, I will be out with you directly, let us be companions, you will help me to keep my eyes off the pavement.

March 3.—Did my lot seem any the worse, on my return to my room yesterday, for the resolution I had made to be a philosopher, and commune with the butterfly? I never thought it looked more habitable. Had I gone down, bent on looking on the

dark side only of the picture, I should have done little more than pace backwards and forwards, cursing, perhaps, in my heart, the rugged pavement and the cruelty of my creditors, and what would that have availed me? I should have lost the beauty of the blue heavens, and the light-hearted gambols of my friend the butterfly; as it was, I was determined to console myself, as well as I could, with the reflection, that every state of life has its privileges and immunities, if viewed aright, and, thus fortified, even the iron bars and the stone floor lost half their ugliness.

This has been a day of events, such days occur now and then, even in the most monotonous routines. First came the Inspector of prisons, followed by the usual retinue, to see that we were all in a thriving state under the Governor's genial dispensation, and to receive any complaints we had to make. As usual, everything was fault-

less ; only the top-sawyer opposite, the cock-of-the-walk among the Frenchmen, had forgotten—a donkey—to put a bottle out of sight, which smelt very much of brandy, and incurred Messieurs les Inspecteurs' severe displeasure.

It was lucky for us that we had a hint from Bolter, who came rushing in with—“ I say, gents—why is the top-sawyer like Jack Ketch at the thoughts of abolition of capital punishments ?—Because he's quite out of spirits.”

Hardly had he spoken, and Colville arranged a solitary half bottle of *vin ordinaire* beside a decanter of *aqua pura*, in a conspicuous position on the shelf, and I stowed away a pint of choice old cognac between the mattresses of my bed, when the great men in office made their appearance.

Nothing could be more satisfactory ~~Col-~~ ;— Colville's innocent smile, and my perfectly-composed demeanour, admitted not even

the shadow of a suspicion ; and after the most polite exchange of compliments and *congés*, the great men took their leave ; Colville ever after declaring ~~that I owed~~ the indulgence of my *petit verre*, every day after dinner, to his “dodge” of the wine and water.

Scarcely was the coast clear again, when the Governor made his appearance, attended by the Concierge in great form, to announce to us the ~~no less~~ gratifying intelligence, that our petition to the Sous-Prefet, for the leaving open our room doors at night, had been favourably received, and that henceforth they were not to be bolted on our side of the prison. This was joyful news, and we expressed our sense of the Sous-Prefet’s gentlemanly conduct in no measured terms.

Until within the last three months, the doors of the debtors’ chambers had never been shut at night ; two massive portals at the staircase foot, leading from each suite of

the deuce to pay

228

TOM THORNTON.

rooms, being considered quite sufficient for all purposes of security against escape ; but, one night, some of the Frenchmen opposite, in a fit of frolic, contrived to force an entrance into the women's ward, through a thin-partition wall. There was ~~a terrible to~~

~~do~~ it was past midnight—some of the ladies began screaming, and soon the whole gaol was in a fearful state of ferment and consternation, which required all the Governor's authority, assisted by Madame D— and the Concierge to suppress. The upshot was, that the gay gallants were at last forced back to their several posts ; and an order came next day, for the debtors' doors to be fastened every evening at seven o'clock, without distinction.

This was rather too bad towards the English, who were located in a separate part of the building, and had nothing whatever to do with their neighbours' gallantries. A petition to the Sous-Prefet has

been the consequence, setting forth the hardships we endure ~~of~~ their transgression; that it is contrary to all sense of justice and humanity, that persons only provisionally arrested for a debt of a hundred and fifty francs should be secured in their rooms every night, under bolts and bars, like felons. Our prayer has been granted; so our condition in this respect, is a great improvement, and the Governor's visit has been a theme of much congratulation on this side.

They are grumbling terribly about it on the other side, so jealous are the Frenchmen always of any privileges enjoyed exclusively by the English; but if they will not let the women alone, it is entirely their own fault—they must bear the penalty of their own naughtiness. As for Bolter, he laughs till he weeps again, when he is talking of the Frenchmen's adventure; and declares, that "if it ~~had not~~ been for one old cat, who

hadn't

ought to have had a taste of the pump for her pains, the whole affair would have gone off as peaceably as Lent ; but Madame, not receiving her fair share of attentions, got crusty, and began squalling, which brought the whole gaol about their ears ; but for this unpleasant interruption, the gay Lotharios would have crept back to their dormitories as quiet as mice, mended the hole in the wall, so as to defy Monsieur le Concierge, were he ten times cleverer than he is, and nobody would have been ~~any~~ the wiser.

a bit The Governor had hardly left us ten minutes, when up came the letters by the last post ; immediately after which I heard Colville whistling in a manner which clearly denoted that something satisfactory had happened.

“ Hollo, Thornton !” cried he, “ what will you give me to go out, and let you have a room with a fire-place in it, eh ?”

“ I wished I might get it,” said I, “ for

his sake as well as my own." In truth, his room, the same which poor St. John occupied, and Barnard lived in for six years, is by far the most comfortable of the four. About twelve feet square with a good window, it admits all the sun to be got, and some of Barnard's fixtures remain, which are very useful and convenient, where one chamber has to answer so many purposes; above all, there is a fire-place, or opening in the wall for a poèle, or stove of foreign construction, which, at first sight to English eyes is a miserable affair, but, when understood, in many respects more convenient than our culinary ranges. Altogether this room is, certainly, the best of the lot, so I really did wish I might get it, if it were fated that Colville should be a free man first.

"Confound those lawyers!" said he, as he continued to peruse a letter which he held in his hand; "what can the fellow desire

more? He says the title's all right, and the money ready, why can't he send the deed for execution, and you might be monarch of all you survey by next Monday?"

"Because, don't you see, gents," explained Bolter, "the bill of costs isn't wound up yet as far as it will go."

"Hang me, Thornton, if there's any name bad enough for some of those lawyers," exclaimed Colville; "but the devil will have his due some day, I suppose?"

"Excuse me," observed Bolter; "you forget he's not half a lawyer that can't cheat the devil."

"Look here—everything's ready—every-
thing's satisfactory—the title unexception-
able, nothing amiss; but there's always an
if."

"How about the costs?" said I.

"Fifty down, on account for this affair,
and then ~~he will~~ advance, or "get advanced,"
~~he says, the seven hundred~~ on the lease-
^{needful}
~~as he calls it,~~

—/ holds if the old score's settled—artful, isn't it?"

"Just as if he couldn't trust to your honour?" ~~said~~ *observed* Bolter.

"The villain knows I'm in a fix and must have the tin on any terms."

*T*rue! ~~How cruel!~~" ejaculated Bolter.

"I suppose I must submit," sighed Colville.

"The sooner the better," responded I.

"You ~~wont~~ take away that old cracked bread pan, Mr. Colville, I'm thinking," said Bolter, plaintively;—"the deuce take those mice! ^{they} pretty well left me without a morsel of breakfast yesterday."

"You may reckon on the bread pan, Bolter," said Colville.

"How much for the old broom and the two rush mats?" asked I.

"What do *you* want with the mats, Mr. Thornton?" interrupted Bolter with great animation, "and that elegant turkey pattern

carpet all over your room ;—why, if I didn't sit with my legs always on the table, I should be found frozen to death six days out of every seven."

“ You may calculate on the rush mats, Bolter,” sympathized Colville in a compassionate tone, which did honour to his heart, “ and Mr. Thornton shall have the broom.”

“ Well, there's no situation, as Mr. Thornton often says, rightly viewed, but has its advantages,” remarked Bolter, looking heavenward.

“ Hear him !” exclaimed Colville.

“ You may laugh, Mr. Colville, because you can afford to make presents ; but don't you think, gents, that a bread pan like that ~~let alone~~ with a cover to it ~~to say nothing of the~~ rush mats—is something to a poor devil obliged to hide his victuals ~~when he has~~ got any ~~in his hat~~, of a night, for fear of the vermin. Of all things a gentleman on ~~short commons~~ has a natural antipathy for,

His last legs

8

chap 5

and no wonder, are the vermin that bolt with his last bit of candle, and take indecent liberties with his butter. Gentlemen with neat tenant's fixtures to their apartments wherein to stow away their prog, and with regular relays, can't be expected to understand a poor ~~devil's~~ disgust to find, when he goes to the shelf of a morning for his breakfast, nothing but the fragments ; and,

—/ bah ! I can't help laughing, though, to think how I caught one of 'em the other day at a bit of sausage I'd saved for my tea. D'ye see, those reprobates love sausages as ~~well as I do~~ — so, what d'ye think I did ? I balanced a tit bit so delicately on the edge of the shelf that a fly's weight would bring it to the ground. Well, having put the water jug just underneath, I ~~retired to rest~~. In less than ten minutes, as I expected, came the enemy— nibble, nibble— squeak, squeak—and down went sausage and Mon-

got into bed.

These reprobates

236

TOM THORNTON.

~~sieur mouse~~ souse ~~head~~ over heels. Up was I, like a rocket.

“ Now you vagabond ! ” said I, “ I’ll teach you to like sausages. Gentlemen not so well versed in the natural history of ~~rats~~ and mice as I am, would probably, have left the thief to swim for his life, or saved him for the cat’s supper. Not I ; it was necessary to make an example of him, as a warning to others against doing the like ; so I just slipped a noose tenderly over his head, and suspended him from a nail in the shelf till I had fastened a bit of the sausage to his tail ; then having read him a sound lecture on the atrocity of his conduct, and pointed out the absolute necessity of a total reformation in his future behaviour, if he wished ever to become a respectable full-sized member of the community, dusted him over with pipeclay, and snipped off the tip of one ear for a keepsake, I let him go.

Since that blessed night, my butter and sausages have reposed unmolested."

" Most judicious and far-sighted politician," said I, " having regard rather to the prevention than the punishment of crime— 'twas wisely, nobly done, all but snipping off the ~~ear~~ that was spiteful."

" Bless your heart, Mr. Thornton; it isn't that I've a cruel heart by nature, I wouldn't tread on a worm; but it is very provoking when a chap's hard up, and barely bachelor's fare to save him from starvation, to have to keep a family of little ones; now isn't it?"

" It was more than provoking," assented I; " it would be ~~iniquitous~~ but that he seemed to have such facilities of passing them so readily to another parish."

" Talking of antipathies to the vermin," said Colville, " puts me in mind of the story of an Englishman, who was in here for a small debt some time ago—the greatest plague the Governor ever had to deal

calamitous in the extreme, it would be iniquitous,

— with ~~it~~ he would sing, he would dance, play off practical jokes on the Concierge, ' chaff' the priest, ridicule the authorities, harangue the prisoners, and fill the whole gaol with wonder and excitement. There was no doubt that he was cracked, ~~no man in his~~ no man in his senses would act as he did. It was useless to expostulate with him ; he would only have laughed at the Governor and pitched the Concierge down stairs ; so ~~they~~ they let him have his way, as, obstinacy rather than want of means having brought him there, they expected he would soon get sick of it, and ~~make himself scarce~~ turn home, ~~make himself scarce~~. No one could imagine what kept a man of his known ability to pay, in prison ; every one declared he must be mad, and mad he certainly was on one point, which had marked him from childhood—his antipathy to cats. Often had he been known by his friends to sit up whole nights watching at his bed-room window, with a fowling-piece in his hands, for any

unlucky stray cat that might wander his way. On entering ~~his~~ prison he observed a fine tabby of Madame's basking on the top of the wall; from that moment he made a vow never to quit the gaol till he had sacrificed puss to his fury. So strongly was

// he bent on it that he got his man to smuggle him in his pistols under pretence of diverting the time by cleaning and putting them in order. Weeks passed, but puss gave him no opportunity to put his meditated revenge into practice. Several times was the Governor called up in the night to put a stop to the scandalous noises proceeding from 'the mad Englishman's' room, when he was invariably found ~~standing al-~~
~~most naked studying the heavens with his~~
~~window wide open.~~ One fine moonlight night, when all was silent as death within the gaol, a loud report of fire-arms was heard; in a moment the guard was out, the Governor and Concierge, with keys and

standing half naked at his open window, studying the heavens.

as if the gaol were on fire

lantern in hand, and frightened out of their wits, were running to and fro; never was witnessed such a tumult, till, looking up they discovered 'the mad Englishman' standing at his open window, holding a pistol in one hand, and pointing with a look of demoniacal triumph to the top of the wall with the other. In a moment all was explained—there lay poor puss in the last agonies. "And now," said he, "I am quite ready to pay my debts, and return like a conquering hero to my home." And return he did next day, having appeased Madame's wrath for the foul death of her favourite by a handsome present, and been pronounced by virtue of some talismanic influence, a *brave homme* by the Governor and Concierge; and, they say, that when any of his sporting friends used to brag of their prowess in the field,

Says he, "fiddle de de!" ~~he would say,~~ "what's that?"
I - d "Did you ever shoot a cat with a pocket pistol by moonlight at twenty yards?"

at fifty yards,

“ Why, that’s nothing to what I did once,” said Bolter, “ when I was in Buckinghamshire—I bet Dick Acre, my uncle’s groom, a gallon of beer that I’d knock over three sparrows sitting abreast on the top of a hayrick ~~at fifty yards~~, with three crab apples in three shies.”

“ And you did it of course,” said Colville ; “ I’ll bet my head of that.”

“ Law, love ye ! yes, as easy as one o’clock ; I’ll tell you just how it was, Mr. Thornton—Acre, said I —”

“ Hark !” cried Colville, rushing to the window, “ what’s the matter now ?”

There was an unusual commotion below, as he spoke, as if there had been an arrival of importance. The convict’s yard was in a state of fearful excitement ; when, in a minute or two, a tall strong-built resolute looking fellow of about fifty was dragged handcuffed and guarded through the ranks that made way for him, as he was hurried to

specially

and appropriated

242

TOM THORNTON.

, and a terrible
place it is.

the dungeon appointed for the rebellious

It was the same poor wretch whose escape

from prison yesterday had created such con-

sternation. The absence of the Concierge

for a few minutes just before lock up time,

enabled him to scale the wall by means of

two long forms fastened end to end; up

them mounted Le Forgeron like a squirrel,

and before the Concierge had come to count

heads for the night, he had reached *terra*

firma, and got clear off.

Aided by the night, he lay about the

fields and hedges, after a long march, till

morning came, when driven by hunger, he

begged some bread at a farm house which

led to his capture. He ought to have

known better than suppose for a moment

that unassisted by friends or money, he

could escape from the gendarmes, for they

say this is his third effort. He boasts,

however, that he will beat them yet. At

present they have got him safe enough in

, and which had been the theme
of universal amazement and
indignation and glory and congratulation
ever since

the dungeon which his recent taste of the green fields and the pure air of heaven must render hideous enough.

In a little while up came the Concierge to announce to us the re-capture of Le Forgeron. Exultation beamed in his eyes as he expatiated on the enormity of the runaway's crime, and the infallibility of the French police.

"How long," I ventured to inquire, "would they keep him in the dungeon?"

"It depended on his behaviour—perhaps a fortnight, if tractable; if not, till the order came for his removal to St. Omer, they would soon cure him of his pranks there."

"By the by, Monsieur le Concierge," said I, appearing to have great deference for his opinions at all times, "what has become of the pale pensive looking youth, with the black hair and the white blouse, that used to walk up and down nearly all day with a book in his hand, looking so un-

happy—so handsome—so superior to his companions?"

" Ah, you mean Fabien Lagasse," answered the Concierge ; " yes, yes, he was a *bon garçon*, a *brave garçon*, not like the rest of them, ~~and~~ gentle and tractable as a lamb, and worthy the adoration of the tender little heart that doated on him, and whose love mon Dieu, ^{set him at liberty.} Not a more charming little brunette in all Boulogne than ma joli, ^{moiselle Elise} ~~when~~ when she is dressed for the promenade, all the demoiselles are ready to die with envy, and the men fight like turkey cocks, for her hand at the ducasses."

continued " Fabien is an orphan, ~~except~~ he has the Concierge, few friends—the women slight him because his heart and hand are plighted to another, the young men regard him only as a successful rival, ~~and~~ besides, he will not drink with them and play at dominoes. With a little money left him by his mother, he opened a Q.

" And Fabien was the favorite?"
interrupted I.

in Boulogne

TOM THORNTON.

245

book stall, and taught writing and arithmetic, but found little encouragement—^{poor boy} how could he expect it? ~~He had got a~~ ^{— h} better living as a marker at a billiard room. Somehow he fell into debt—his stock of books and stationery was seized, and they put him in here, where, if heaven had not ~~helped him~~, he might have stayed till the summer had gone, and the *ducasse*, poor boy! were all over. *You see, Mademoiselle,*

~~You see, Mademoiselle~~, like a good careful little thing as she is, had saved enough to furnish their salon magnificently for them, out of her earnings, added to a small sum in Monsieur Cheveau's hands—the gift of her grandmother. No doubt it went to her heart to part with this treasure, which was to have made them so happy, ^{so} *superbe*; but her love for Fabien was greater than her love for anything else, and it was quite impossible, if he remained in prison, that they could be married this summer,

sent an angel to help him, as it did,
here

and the *ducasses* and the fêtes would then be over, and her new clothes all *passes* and spoilt ; so, like an angel as she is, she went unknown to any one, and paid his debts, and I met them both on Sunday arm in arm together, the handsomest and happiest couple on the *port*. This silk handkerchief," continued the Concierge, expanding his chest and pointing to his neck with much satisfaction, "was Fabien's last gift before he left ; ah, he was a *bon garçon*, a *brave garçon*!" and so saying, and for once backing out of the room without falling over the chairs, he wished us *bon jour*, to go and have a doze in the kitchen with old Moustch before dinner.

" Only think of that now !" exclaimed Bolter, who stood at his usual post, listening attentively, while the Concierge was telling his story of Fabien and Elise ; " catch any English girl doing as much for her sweetheart ; well, whip me, if those

French girls arn't devils, where they take a fancy." 8

"Angels, you mean, man," suggested corrected Colville, "with a dash of the diable."

"Devils or angels," continued Bolter, "there's nothing like a woman in misfortune; why now—between friends—whip me, if I don't always think, when Mademoiselle meets me of a morning down stairs, looking so pleasant and insinuating, that she has more than half a mind to say—Bolter, my dear, now's your time—the wicket's open, let us fly." 8

"Don't you think, Thornton," said Colville, "that if Bolter's governor knew the danger his hopeful son is in here, he might be induced to rescue him from his impending fate, and come down with the tin?" son's

"He, he, he!" sputtered Bolter, rubbing his nose, "shouldn't I like to see him doing it?" man

"It's no laughing matter, I'm thinking," at all events,

A slight noise from the room adjoining arrested our attention at this moment. Bolter rustled xx

interrupted.

~~continued~~ Colville, "~~I never saw such a fellow.~~"

"What would you have a chap do!" roared Bolter—"cry in a prison? ~~Oh, no—~~ I save that for my wedding day! ~~I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Thornton,~~ ever since Mr. Colville presented Mademoiselle with that bouquet of polyanthus, he can't bear her to cast a sheep's eye at any other well-favoured gent. D'ye see—it's nothing but jealousy!"

"Hit it, by Jove!" cried Colville.

"*Donc allez*," said I, "*et faites votre devoir sur la cour*"

putting on a face of great gravity.

END OF VOL. II.

; but first let us sign a reprieve for that poor devil there — temper justice with mercy, where we can
Darling & Son, Printers, 31, Leadenhall Street, London.
and then go as fast as you please,
and fight it out for Mademoiselle.

~~xx from page 247~~
out, and returned in an instant exultingly flourishing a rat trap, in which he had just caught the enemy in the fact. Tears rolled down his cheeks, but whether of joy or commiseration, it was difficult to determine. — "Left to the impulses of my natural affection," said he, "mercy would prevail over justice; but I, gents, have a public duty to perform, as well as my creditors. It breaks my heart to do an unkind act, but duty-duty-gents! — he, he, he! — why am I like Mr. Justice Coleridge? — Because I am placed here ^{don't you see?} to do my duty — because I am about to pass sentence of death, with aching heart, and streaming eyes, on the prisoner at the bar, and to

exhort him to dismiss from his guilty mind any delusive hopes of mercy in this world, from which his own wickedness and thievish propensities alone are about to sever him for ever, and to implore him, as a friend and benefactor, to employ the few remaining moments of his guilty life in preparing for that dark, terrible journey which conducts to a town from whence no traveller returns - to fix his thoughts solely on the fate that awaits him - the gibbet that is yawning for his guilty neck; for, as he shewed no mercy to his victim - my candle ends and cold potatoes - neither can he expect

mercy to be shewed to him.
he, he, he! - that's justice,
anyhow? ~~And~~ And I'll leave it
to the court here assembled, and
my country, to determine whether
I should be doing my duty, as
a judge and a Christian, if
I omitted this salutary oppor-
tunity ~~to avenge~~ to add all the
terrors in my power to the
dreadful sentence it is ^{now} my
painful duty to pronounce,
viz - That the prisoner at the
bar be taken ~~to~~ the place from
whence he came, and from thence
to the yard beneath, and there and
there, in the presence and at the
mercy of old Moustch, be baited,
bulled, and bitten, till he be dead.
And may his fate serve as a
warning - he, he, he! - to ^{all} sinners
like himself. - A corker that - eh, gentle

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 084217352